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Native children need Native foster homes

by John Copley

When a ten month old baby boy drowned in his bathtub near the end of April this year the Alberta

government stepped in and severed the Samson First Nation's right to control its child welfare programs. The death, the seventh in the past two and half years to children under the care of the Kasohkew Child Wellness Society (KCWS), came just days after a fatality inquiry report into the August 11 1999 death of two year old Korvette Crier, put the blame on government, saying that foster care delivery in the province was "too compartmentalized and distant from the eyes of the ministry."

In that case, two year old Korvette Crier was pushed by her non-Native foster mother, Debbie Kambeitz who in a moment of anger was so violent with the child she died as result of her injuries. Kambeitz pleaded guilty and received a two year jail sentence.

In this case the baby boy who has come to be known by his initials, JC, was also living in a non-Native foster home, but an ensuing investigation by the RCMP ended when they determined the death to be accidental.

In both cases KCWS had been contracting the services of a non-accredited, professional for-profit organization, Heritage Family Services, who in turn fostered the children to non-accredited foster homes. As it turns out, when JC drowned while having a bath last month, the foster parents of JC had already terminated their arrangements with Heritage and had signed on with an accredited agency, Parkland Youth Homes.

When Children's Services Minister Iris Evans took away KCWS's power to control child welfare a few angry words could be heard around the community and there were even some vague threats about a courtroom resolution if government didn't back off. Evans said before she'd make any decisions she would have to look deeper into the matter. It turns out she was taking the recommendations of the Crier inquiry seriously and had begun a review of the matter.

"Once more," she told media, "when you have a death of a child, you feel the immediate impact of that tragedy and you say, 'are things happening the way they should be happening?'"

The number of Native children in foster care is

enormous, but perhaps even worse is the fact that most Aboriginal children in foster care are in non-Native homes, something that can only be rectified if more Aboriginal homes get involved in fostering Aboriginal children. Janet Johnson, a member of the Samson Cree Nation and a foster mother who takes her children to powwows and dances and other traditional outings, says she is angry that more effort isn't being put into finding homes in Hobbema.

"A lot of our children become lost in the system," Johnson said recently. "They aren't brought up in our language and culture. Somebody from our band should be running this. She would be familiar with our community and take more of an interest in the children."

A week after stripping the band of its control over child welfare, Evans returned the authority, but only after laying some ground rules and making it clear that government was close at hand. In returning the authority, the minister insisted that Children's Services be granted full access to both case files and children.

Kasohkewew president Patrick Cutknie defended the efforts and record of KCWS but told media that financial shortfalls are commonplace. "The public has to recognize," he said, "that the policy that applies to non-Indian people does not apply on the reserve. We do experience limitations in funding. We do experience limitations in resource people (and) resource programs. We do have to deal with a situation of inequality."

The irony of this story is that everyone involved - the Samson Nation, Minister Evans, KCWS have yet to figure out how to get on the same page. The safety and wellbeing of the children are the issue here - they are the only thing that matters. Why then hasn't the Kasohkewew Child Wellness Society, which was established in 1997 and has been operating as the child welfare agency of record ever since, figured out the problem and done something about it. Aboriginal children need to be in Aboriginal homes. They need their culture, they need their tradition, they need their language, they need their identity. Too often Native children are the subjects of beatings and abuse by non-Native foster parents with little regard for anything but the love of the money they get for taking in a child. More needs to be done to put Aboriginal children in Aboriginal foster homes and anything less than an honest, full-out effort to do so will be in vain. Cooperation is needed from government, from First Nations and from caring Aboriginal foster parents.

The first move will have to be made by government, a fact made obvious by the remarks of former child advocate, Bob Recliner, who in his 2000 report wrote that "there is little evidence" that government is helping to recruit and properly train support staff or provide an ongoing monitoring system to ensure the well being of children in foster care.



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Alexander First Nation settlement offers a future of hope and prosperity

by John Copley

The Alexander First Nation near Morinville, Alberta, is no stranger when it comes to negotiation. But never before have their efforts been rewarded as they were last month when an agreement was reached between Ottawa, Alberta and Alexander Nation leaders and voters who turned out in droves to put their names on a ballot that eventually won the nearly 1700 First Nation members almost \$63 million in cash.

In making the announcement, Chief Victoria Arcand told media that she and her council were "extremely pleased" with the turnout of voters who overwhelmingly agreed to accept a settlement package negotiated by the Alexander First Nation's chief negotiator, Rene Paul.

"The decision by the electorate will ensure Alexander First Nation a firm foundation from which to build a secure and prosperous economic future now and for future generations," said Chief Arcand. "One of the reasons I believe the voters accepted this offer was that they were provided with a great deal of factual information on the offer and also had the opportunity to be heard at numerous community meetings." Arcand lauded the hard work and diligence of negotiator Rene Paul, a band member who has spent "many years negotiating to reach a settlement that was fair" and who then "spent a great many more hours explaining it to our members," added Chief Arcand.

The settlement, which totals \$92,965,640, resolves a long-standing disagreement over the surrender of 9,518 acres of land that belonged to the Alexander Indian Reserve #134 back on December 29, 1905. During the negotiation period Alexander leaders and negotiators pointed out several errors that were made during what appears to have been a somewhat hasty land grab, including the fact that not enough members were on hand to cast a vote to legitimize the surrender process. That, it was pointed out, could have been due to the fact that a funeral of a recently deceased band member was taking place the day the (unofficial) vote took place.

More than 75 percent of the agreed compensation money will be placed in a trust agreement fund, said Chief Arcand. "To ensure that future generations of Alexander First Nation members benefit from the settlement of the claim."

When the Alexander membership cast its vote on April 5 this year, 737 members, or 83 percent of the possible 884 eligible voters, turned up at the polls. After the ballot count was complete it was determined



that 87 percent of the voters supported the compensation package.

A 1998 Treaty Land Entitlement Settlement, won by the Alexander Nation because of unfulfilled promises that date back to the signing of Treaty 6 in 1877, will not be affected by the recent Land Claim Surrender Settlement Agreement.

"Appropriate confirmation was given so that Treaty 6 and the rights flowing to Alexander will not be affected or jeopardized," explained Chief Arcand, who added that "assurances were given by Canada that the programs and services provided, including the level of funding to Alexander, are not affected by the Settlement Agreement."

In 1880 a survey to determine reserve land was made, but according to government sources, "a historical review indicated that several band members were not counted and as a result, the First Nation was not provided with its full entitlement of reserve lands."

The document went on to say that the 1998 settlement agreement fulfilled "the outstanding legal requirement of the Governments of Canada and Alberta to provide the Alexander First Nation with additional lands to offset the original shortfall of reserve lands."

In that agreement Alberta agreed to provide "not

less than 5,140 acres of unoccupied Provincial Crown lands to be set aside as reserve lands for the Alexander First Nation."

The land agreed upon is divided into two parcels. The larger of the two is a 5130-acre site near Fox Creek; the smaller is approximately 10 acres in size and is located near Fort Assiniboine. As part of the agreement, the Alexander First Nation has the option of purchasing "up to an additional 10,000 acres of fee-simple lands, on a willing seller/willing buyer basis."

So far the First Nation has purchased 554 acres of land adjacent to the south border of the current reserve. To be eligible to be added to the reserve, the remaining 9,446 acres must be within an identified purchase area of approximately 12,260 acres. Canada, which has five years from the date of the agreement to begin setting apart eligible purchase lands as reserve lands, is currently in the process of doing so.

Negotiations on the 1905 Surrender Claim began in 1998 and were concluded early this year. The next step of the agreement will reach fruition when the federal government obtains the concurrence of the Treasury Board. The Alexander First Nation is located just west of the Town of Morinville, about 20 kilometres north of Edmonton.

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Enoch leaders discuss casino with city officials

by John Copley

The Enoch Cree Nation, located just west of Edmonton on Highway 16, is one of several Alberta First Nation communities that recently submitted a proposal to the Alberta Gaming Commission to open a new casino. In one of the many phases the band will have to go through to win their bid, Enoch leaders and lawyers recently met with City of Edmonton officials to discuss their plan. The main topic on the agenda of their first meeting dealt with a proposal by the band for delivery of municipal services, something that will be needed if the First Nation group is to proceed with the huge multi-facility mega-project they have in mind. In addition to a first-class, state-of-the-art casino, the Enoch Cree are planning to build a five-star hotel, two ice rinks, two soccer fields and an as yet unnamed series of developments that could encompass more than 4,000 hectares of reserve land.

Enoch Cree Nation Economic Development Officer Robert Morin said the band "wants to be good neighbours" and "wants to work with the communities." He and other band administrators also made it clear that they were willing to foot the cost, despite the fact that those costs — for sewer, water and roads — could amount to more than \$10 million. Though he did not elaborate, Morin told city councillors the Enoch Cree Nation plans to replace its current oil and gas revenues with new built on reserve lands.

Edmonton's GM of Planning and Development, Larry Benowski, told media recently that the band

had made it clear that "they are prepared to pay their fair share."

Unlike the last time a conversation about a casino project by the Enoch Nation made the news and local gaming experts sloughed off the idea as unworkable and "not as easy a task as it seems," the news of the Enoch Cree's actual submission for a new casino license met with grumbles and objections by local casino owners and others.

The grumbling, which at times sounded like worried whine, began with the realization that if Enoch succeeds in its bid, the competition is about to get a little tougher. Words such as "unfair," "not enough gamblers," "too much competition" and "everyone will suffer losses if Enoch opens a casino," came from several of the gaming establishments already open for business. Words that included, "it's going to impact our transportation systems," and "the city has at risk here a lot of money..." came from several city councillors who expressed their objections to endorsing the casino development.

"We need to be somehow compensated or have some kind of input into the process," remarked Councillor Stephen Mandel.

"It's going to impact policing services and our emergency response and those are definite costs," added Councillor Karen Leibovici. Enoch Nation lawyer Jack Agries said his client wants to be treated like any of the other communities that borders Alberta's capital, adding that the location chosen for the casino (215 Street and 79 Avenue) was picked because of its close proximity to city services.

The new set of policies drafted up last year incorporate a different set of rules for First Nations-based casino ventures, but they are no less stringent than their non-Aboriginal counterparts. The biggest differences between the two types of gaming operations are evident by how the income derived from gaming activities is shared and how the profits will be divided. The implementation of a First Nations Development Fund (FNDF) that will direct money toward supporting social, economic and community development projects will also be part of the First Nations package. The money that goes into the fund will be earmarked for programs in all of Alberta's First Nations communities and will include areas such as addictions, health, housing, education and social well being.

Under the new policy Native-run casinos don't need to secure charities with which to share revenue, the First Nation that hosts the casino will be the charity. The host nation will have to bring in an outside casino operator because as a charity, they can not operate it themselves. Under current regulations the casinos are required to dole out up to half the money they earn from the gaming tables to the charity hosting the event. Native casinos will only have to write a check to the Alberta Lottery Fund for 30 percent of the revenue they generate from slot machines as opposed to 70 percent in the non-Native sector. Another 30 percent of that money will be divided equally between the host First Nation and the casino operator with the



remaining 40 percent being directed to a newly developed FNDF.

The new rules and guidelines are expected to have an immediate impact on several First Nations reserves in Alberta who have already been working hard to secure government approval for casino operations. In addition to a proposal by the Enoch Nation, others, including one from the Tsuu T'ina First Nation, located on Calgary's southwest corner, the Onion Lake First Nation near Bonnyville and the Kainaiwa First Nation near Lethbridge are also on the table.

The Tsuu T'ina Nation has already made plans to build a \$700 million casino/hotel resort on the outskirts of Calgary, a project that Chief Roy Whitney says will provide 500 full time jobs for people in his community once the facility is open. The entire project is expected to take more than 10 years to complete, though gaming will begin much quicker. In earlier comments to media, Chief Whitney said (if) the government went ahead with an Aboriginal gaming policy they could begin building immediately. So far a date has not been announced for the ground-breaking ceremony and Alberta Native News was unable to contact Chief Whitney prior to press time.

Despite several differences in rules and casino setup agreements, Native casino operations, like all others in the province, are governed under the mandate of the Alberta Liquor and Gaming Commission.

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Stoney Nation chiefs are looking for justice

by Ennis Morris

It's not very often that a First Nation community will call a press conference to complain the way they are being treated by industry, but sometimes, increasing public awareness can help bring about justice. "We feel we need to involve the media in this matter, just to get things moving," explained Stoney First Nation Chief Ernest Wesley, during a Calgary news conference called in early May to discuss the frustration and dissatisfaction the Stoney Nation finds itself in trying to collect promised oil and gas revenues.

Chief Wesley told media he and other Stoney Nation Chiefs were "totally frustrated" over the way they were being treated by Indian Oil and Gas, a federal entity created in the mid-1980s to protect and collect gas and oil royalties owed to First Nations by major American and Canadian oil companies extracting resources from traditional lands. Wesley accused the organization of failing to collect and/or failing to pay what is owed.

Indian Oil and Gas told the Stoney Nation in 1993 that they had quit trying to collect money from several oil companies who claimed they had paid the money to the province in error. The lack of effort to collect money owing the Stoney Nation left the First Nation community no choice but to sue. They launched a lawsuit against

PanCanadian Petroleum Ltd. As usual, trying to tie up an oil company or hold it to its commitments, proved to be little more than futile. In fact, it was seven long years later before the Alberta Court of Appeal ruled in favour of the Stoney Nation, but when they did they put limits on what could be collected. PanCanadian only had to pay what was owed

over the previous six years - despite the fact that the band had launched the court action seven years earlier.

"This ruling didn't just affect us, it affected many more First Nations groups in Alberta," said Chief Wesley, who called the move biased and unfair.

The Stoney Nation says it is owed more than \$10 million in lost revenues but because of the court ruling, they won't pay what was originally agreed to.

Strater Crowfoot is the man at the helm of Indian Oil and Gas. He recently told media that he was certain the oil companies would pay the royalties that were incorrectly deducted and sent elsewhere, but when asked what was taking so long, he passed the buck by claiming: "You're asking the wrong people because I wasn't around back then."

Crowfoot said his agency has to follow the rules of the court and could not collect money owed prior to the six-year period they'd allowed for.

"Legally, that's what the companies are on the hook for," he told Canadian Press, adding that he could answer for what had happened since he'd joined Indian Oil and Gas in 1996. Crowfoot is the executive director of the company and has been for several years but he said he couldn't say why the entity failed in its job and quitting to collect misspent royalties long before the court ordered the six-year limit. One major Canadian oil producer, PetroCanada, told media that they'd squared their books when they wrote the Stoney Nation a cheque for \$70,000 for what they claimed was all of the money improperly deducted. Chief Wesley called that statement a joke, claiming that PetroCanada actually owes them more than \$2 million in improper deductions that go back as far as 1978.

PetroCanada lawyer Rusty Miller said the \$70,000 was "made in trust to our lawyers so that the

interest would gather and we made it available to the federal government."

But that doesn't do the Stoney Nation any good - the oil company is taking advantage of a misguided court ruling to get out of paying what it legitimately owes. Stoney Nation lawyer, Doug Rae, said the six-year ruling was nothing more than "legal fiction" and said he wants Indian Oil and Gas to collect the full amount.



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First Nations' youth rewarded for excellence in science

Fifty-five First Nation students from across Canada are being rewarded for their dedication and excellence in the field of science by being selected to attend the first annual First Nations National Science Camp in Edmonton from May 25 to June 1, 2002.

They are all travelling to Edmonton in late May for a week filled with meetings and interaction with representatives of private industry in the science field as well as tours that include the Syncrude site in northern Alberta, Odyssey (Edmonton Space and

Sciences Centre) and Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump in southern Alberta.

The First Nations Science Camp is open to First Nations students between the ages of 12 and 19 years. Each region and territory across Canada will select five students to attend the camp based on criteria established by the region or territory.

"The science camp provides an incentive to First Nations youth to work hard and excel in the field of science," said Robert Nault, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC).

"As these students are still at a junior high school age, their career path choices are still wide open. Hopefully, through this camp, we will be able to demonstrate to the students that the field of science is going to provide a significant number of job opportunities for years to come."

The students will be given the opportunity to interact with private industry representatives who are looking to the burgeoning First Nations work force to satisfy their labour requirements many years into the future. The students will have the opportunity to discuss training requirements and employment prospects with the industry representatives.

"The students will also be exposed to various aspects of the First Nations cultures from the host region and will meet like-minded youth from other regions and cultures," said Jim Baylis, Education Officer, INAC Alberta Region, one of the organizers of the camp. "They will serve as examples for other



students in future years who wish to attend this camp."

The camp will be held in a different region each year to enable the host region to showcase the science-related opportunities available in their region.



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Atuqtuarvik Corp. provides funds for Nunavut scholars

Atuqtuarvik Corporation of Rankin Inlet, Nunavut, is joining ten other Canadian and U.S. companies in supporting the Foundation for the Advancement of Aboriginal Youth (FAAY), Canada's oldest general interest scholarship and bursary program for Aboriginal youth.

Established in 1994, FAAY has awarded almost \$750,000 to approximately 600 Aboriginal students in all areas of study.

"This scholarship program works by extending hope, opportunity and tangible recognition to many young Inuit. Atuqtuarvik Corporation's sponsorship will be a significant and tangible demonstration of our commitment to building capacity in Nunavut communities," said John Hickie, Chairperson.

"Supporting FAAY is a great way for Atuqtuarvik Corporation to invest in the future of Nunavut youth," said Ken Toner, President and CEO. "This support will benefit our Corporation by helping to train and educate the next generation of Nunavut's leaders, and those are the people we will do business with."

Atuqtuarvik Corporation has made a three-year

commitment to FAAY - their funds will provide three scholarships of \$2500 per year for post-secondary students and six bursaries of \$750 per year for secondary students. All will be directed to students enrolled as beneficiaries under the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. Scholarship students are to be enrolled in any program of studies at any accredited educational institution in Canada and bursary students are to be enrolled in Nunavut High Schools.

"I am very pleased to welcome Atuqtuarvik Corporation to the FAAY family," said Jocelyne Souldre, President and CEO of the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB). "They are the first Nunavut-based company to make a contribution to FAAY - in fact, they are the first Aboriginal company to come forward and lend a hand. I encourage other companies, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, to join them."

CCAB is Canada's leading organization dedicated to promoting the full participation of Aboriginal people in the Canadian economy.

Atuqtuarvik Corporation is an investment and loan fund created by Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the Nunavut Trust to help ensure direct Inuit participation in major economic opportunities. The corporation provides loans and equity funding for the purposes of business start-up, business expansion and business acquisition.

Find out more about FAAY and CCAB on the World Wide Web at www.ccab-canada.com or www.aboriginalbiz.com.

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Learning Makes The Difference

AFN urges gov't to disregard referendum results

The National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Matthew Coon Come, is urging the B.C. government to disregard the results to its controversial referendum on the BC Treaty Process.

"Church leaders, business organizations, journalists, citizens, First Nations have all condemned this referendum as being divisive, unprofessional and misleading," National Chief Coon Come remarked. "The questions are so confusing that, regardless of the results, the B.C. government could interpret them any way they wish."

Eight questions have been put forward to the B.C. public with the intent of providing the government of Premier Gordon Campbell with mandates to advance

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at the treaty tables. Over 70 percent of the 198 First Nations in B.C. have been trying to negotiate land settlements over the last 10 years.

Legal and polling experts have condemned many of the questions as being irrelevant and completely outside the constitutional jurisdiction of the Campbell government.

"Creativity is what's needed at the treaty tables to get settlements, not narrow government mandates based on the results of some nebulous referendum. If the Campbell government wants to see progress at the treaty tables during its term in office, it should show it by disregarding the results of the treaty referendum, mandating its negotiators to be more flexible with First Nations and pressuring the federal government to make creativity a negotiating priority," insisted National Chief Matthew Coon Come.

First Nations were enticed into the BC Treaty Process over 10 years ago by the provincial and federal governments who committed to abide by 19 principles signed off in a sacred ceremony in 1992.

"The reason that there has not been a single treaty signed in 10 years of negotiations has nothing to do with how First Nations have conducted themselves in the negotiations," added the National Chief. "Almost the day after those 19 principles were committed to, the province and federal government were setting conditions that made it impossible for settlements to happen. Removing compensation for lost lands from the treaty tables, limiting land settlements to 5 percent of the lands lost and fiddling with interim measures agreements have ensured that no settlements would ever be achieved."

The National Chief will be monitoring the results of the treaty referendum closely and meeting with B.C.'s First Nation Summit leaders in the coming weeks to discuss strategies to dealing with the aftermath of the referendum.

The Assembly of First Nations is the national organization representing 633 First Nations communities across Canada and First Nations citizens living in urban and rural communities.

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June 21 is Aboriginal Day

by John Copley

National Aboriginal Day is just a month away and from coast to coast both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations and communities are getting ready for this year's festivities. Though the official list of planned celebrations is seldom available before the first of June, interested participants and spectators will be happy to know that many of the local and community events maintain the same location each year, though their planned events do sometimes change to suit special occasions related to Aboriginal lifestyle, tradition, culture and famous or celebrated people.

The event has been getting bigger with each passing year. Last year for example the event did celebrate its most successful year as thousands of Canadians turned out to observe and to participate in the largest showing since the event was first initiated in Government House on June 13, 1996.

Participation and celebration of the event began slowly but during the past several years a great deal of promotion, much from within the Aboriginal community, has been steadily paying off. Better organization and preparation, combined with a variety of unique and interesting pre-event programs designed to keep the public advised and aware that June 21 is a day to celebrate, have had a great deal to do with the gradual increase in interest and participation.

One of the most significant events to commemorate National Aboriginal Day 2001 took place with the unveiling in Ottawa of the Aboriginal War Memorial, a milestone achieved through the hard work and determination of the National Aboriginal Veterans Association (NAVA) and its former president, Sam Sinclair. During the June 21 noon-hour ceremony at Ottawa's Confederation Square, Governor General Adrienne Clarkson called the yet-uncompleted memorial "a living monument" that paid tribute to the memory of Aboriginal Canadians who gave their lives for their country. NAVA has continued to raise extra funds to complete the finishing touches on the new memorial, something that organizers are trying to have completed in time for this year's gala.

First launched on June 21, 1996, National Aboriginal Day was designed so that all Canadians are able have the opportunity to celebrate Aboriginal culture and to participate in special events that honour and recognize the significant contributions that Aboriginal people have made in Canada's growth, and by appreciating and recognizing the Aboriginal community for what it is today, a rich and culturally diverse society that is moving quickly forward in areas such as education, economics, politics and land base development.

Official recognition of National Aboriginal Day (NAD) came in 1996, one year after the participants of the Sacred Assembly, a national meeting organized by MP Elijah Harper, pushed ahead with a call for a special day of recognition, something that Native leaders had been trying to accomplish ever since the idea first surfaced via the National Indian Brotherhood in 1982.

June 21 was chosen as the fixed date for National Aboriginal Day because the summer solstice, the longest day of the year, is a day on which many generations of Aboriginal peoples have traditionally celebrated their heritage and culture. National Aboriginal Day is designed to represent the achievements and history of all Aboriginal peoples in Canada: First Nations, Metis and Inuit.

Check out the INAC website (www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/nad/) at the end of May for a full list of this year's programs. You'll also find an abundance of useful information including data on how the event was initiated, what it is designed to accomplish and a run down of what's happened in the different venues over the past five years.

In 1999 INAC invited new, emerging and professional artists from across Canada to submit an original piece of artwork that reflected one of three themes: Celebrating First Nations, Celebrating Inuit, or Celebrating Metis.

Announcing the invitation to artists, Indian Affairs Minister Robert Nault commented that, "the magnificent artistic contributions of Aboriginal peoples in Canada are cherished throughout the world. It is only fitting that emerging and professional Aboriginal artists in Canada are invited to put their considerable talents to work and participate in a poster competition to help develop a fresh and exciting look for National Aboriginal Day in the new millennium."

When the deadline date approached nearly 200 pieces had been submitted from Aboriginal artists representing all regions of Canada. A jury comprised of three independent Aboriginal artists, Christine Sioui Wawanoloth, Ramus Avingaq and David Hannan, chose the winning pieces.

On March 28, 2000, the three winning artists, each of whom represented one of Canada's constitutionally-recognized Aboriginal groups, First Nations, Inuit and Metis, saw their work unveiled at a special ceremony in the House of Commons. Their work was later highlighted on a series of NAD products including posters, postcards, pamphlet and bookmarks, each of which is available to the general public.

Be a participant at Aboriginal Day 2002. Contact your local organizations for a list of local events and remember to check the INAC website for the national picture.

The one day event is being met in Edmonton with three days of celebration, beginning on Thursday, June 20. That's when the Edmonton-based Provincial Museum of Alberta and the Synerude Gallery of Aboriginal Culture get involved. The latter offers a unique storytelling approach to Aboriginal culture and historical fact and is a must-see attraction for anyone interested in Aboriginal history and tradition.



June 21



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Canada

Tseycum First Nation fears burial ground paved over

by H. C. Miller

A tiny Indian Reserve situated on the southern end of Vancouver Island in British Columbia is in danger of losing its battle to preserve ancient burial grounds. With a membership of just slightly more than 100, the Tseycum First Nation is engaged in a David and Goliath struggle with government to prevent airport expansion which would pave over an area where the remains of ancestors have rested for centuries.

Recently band office representatives met with British Columbia's Minister of Sustainable Resource Management, the Honourable Stan Hagen, MLA Comox. Chief Vern Jacks says the airport issue is just the latest development that threatens their lands, with considerable destruction of their traditional territory already having occurred. "The governments are all passing the buck - the municipal officials say it's not their concern, and the federal and provincial governments don't want to listen to us either," he explains.

The group met for an hour with Hagen on May 8. "We have to stress our feelings about the desecration of our ancestral lands. The people have been laid to rest there for centuries - it goes beyond the treaties, which were only signed 120 years ago or so," he says. The band has been writing letters and requesting meetings to have further development in the area stopped for years. "Hopefully, the next step will be for the minister will visit us here, to see for himself. He listened and it seemed like he was willing to sit down with us," says Jacks.

The cultural implications of losing the area are difficult to determine. "The teachings which we live by came to us from the people who now live there," says



Jacks. "Two cultures are clashing here, and we need mutual respect for each other." Development projects have been ongoing for over a century, he says. "As far back as 1888 a village was destroyed when a new housing development covered a portion of our lands," he says. One important aspect is that, according to tradition, only Elders can dig in the sacred areas. "Not just anyone is even allowed to be there."

It takes a long time to learn about another's culture and begin to understand it. "You can't absorb our whole culture in the space of a one-hour meeting," he says. Instead of making the attempt to understand, government officials often emphasize the monetary benefits which the band, which has no economic activity on-reserve, could receive from relinquishing the lands. "They can't buy us off. They try to flash a cheque in front of us and hope we'll forget."

Support from the rest of the Canada has been phenomenal. "We've had lots of communications from First Nations people across the country who are concerned every time they hear about an issue such as ours," he says. He hopes the support continues, and Stan Hagen's office is bombarded with requests for a fair and equitable solution to the band's problem.

"With this kind of support, the minister's office should listen to us. Other B.C. bands have spoken up,

such as the Cowichan people, who are a really big group of First Nations here in British Columbia," he says. First Nations recognize that their beliefs, their spirituality, and their dreams for the future have all evolved from the ancestors who now live under the threatened lands. "Generations to come need to be able to recognize these Elders too." It doesn't seem right that people who have lived on the land for thousands of years should be losing out to mainstream culture who have only been in Canada for a few hundred years.

Stan Hagen's office, the Department of Sustainable Resource Management, was not able to make any firm commitment to the possible solution that might be facilitated as a result of the meeting with the Tseycum First Nations. He instructed his staff to respond to inquiries, however, by saying the concerns of the First Nation will be reviewed and the minister's office will be communicating the results, says Suzanne McPhet, media relations coordinator for the Liberal minister. There will be more information forthcoming, as the situation is examined, she says. The minister felt that the presentation Jacks and the others made at the May 8 meeting was very impassioned. "He wants them to know he is anxious to work with First Nations to develop relationships based on respect."

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Focus on Elders

Elders have positive influence on Aboriginal prisoners

by John Copley

Aboriginal Elders are playing a bigger role today than they have since the colonization of Canada. They participate at conferences, conventions, negotiations and countless other venues where they lend their voices, their advice and their wisdom to those who need it and to those who seek it. One of the most important areas of accomplishment comes from the important work they do in Canada's provincial and federal institutions for incarcerated lawbreakers.

"The work of the Elders in the prison system has gone unnoticed in the past, but that is no longer the case," said Elder Christine Daniels, in a recent interview with *Alberta Native News*. "Today it is not uncommon for Canada's jailers to work with Aboriginal Elders; they have come to realize that different cultures are borne with different ways. Aboriginal people have cultural differences that make it difficult to rehabilitate or restrain without cultural sensitivity."

The jails of the nation are full of people who'd rather not be there, but because of their lifestyle, their attitudes and their actions, Canada's courts saw no alternative but to extract them from society and put them into little communities of their own. The jails, are nearly filled to capacity in Canada, where in the year 2000 alone, more than 2,300,000 crimes were committed by people who have difficulty operating and communicating honestly, logically, openly, fairly and compassionately.

"As an Elder I must understand sociology, anthropology, medicine, methodology, mythology, talentology, linguistics, history, herbology, political science, spirituality, the migratory patterns of both animals and people and the physical and mental attitudes and capabilities that drive us all and set our direction in life."

—Elder Christine Daniels, May 15, 2002

There are a multitude of reasons why people go to jail and there are an equally large number of reasons why, despite the fact that they've learned what it means to lose their freedom, they go back time and time again. "I've been involved with the prison system for the last 14 years," explained Christine Daniels, who is currently working on a part time basis with Aboriginal prisoners at the Edmonton Max, "and it has been evident since the beginning that western justice is much different than traditional Aboriginal justice and that's where the breakdown takes place. When Aboriginal Elders get involved, the chance of rehabilitation or successful reintegration into society is enhanced. Elders working with prisoners can share their traditional knowledge; they can help improve self-esteem, they can offer food for thought and they can help open doors to new attitudes and positive action. Many Native people have lost their way, the residential schools saw to that, but once they are put back on the right path they often see and understand what it was that got them in trouble in the first place. This knowledge often inspires greater learning and as a result many prisoners are changing their lives around and putting their new wisdom to work in meaningful ways."

Originally from the Saddle Lake First Nation, Ms. Daniels now makes her home in Edmonton. Over the years she's also worked with prisoners at the Remand Centre, Fort Saskatchewan and the Edmonton Institution for Women. She says almost every Native prisoner has something in common and that something is loneliness, a lack of self-esteem and bewilderment over their current predicament.

Western justice serves a definite purpose, it ensures conformity among all citizens by punishing behaviour considered atypical and uncharacteristic of what society perceives as acceptable. Aboriginal justice on the other hand is designed to both heal the offender and to restore peace and order in the community. Punishment is not the main objective but when it does happen it is usually because the offender must meet face to face with his/her accuser. Because of this difference



it is not unusual to see conflict arise when Canada's justice system attempts to enforce its rules on traditional Aboriginal thinking. In his book, *Dancing with a Ghost*, author Rupert Ross points out numerous differences in the ways that justice applies itself to different individuals. A crown prosecutor with an extensive background of experiences gained by his years working with Aboriginal people, Ross is a recognized expert on justice and how it applies to Native cultures.

In his book Ross says that many Aboriginal communities discourage emotion and do not permit outbreaks of anger, grief, fear or sorrow. That is one reason, he adds, that Aboriginal people have a higher incarceration rate than non-Aboriginal Canadians and a reason that they are refused probation, parole and early release. The courts he says, often misunderstand the lack of emotion, the lack of eye contact, the lack of visible grief or sorrow. Even psychiatric assessments by recognized psychiatrists fail to understand or appreciate the vast differences in culture and how these differences affect attitudes and actions both in the courtroom and out. He says Aboriginal offenders are often seen as being "uncommunicative, uncooperative, unresponsive and void of emotion."

"Yes," agreed Elder Christine Daniels, "that is often the case. In some areas the courts are becoming more sensitive to this issue but there is still much to be done. It is this type of knowledge that should be taught in the university classrooms, in the law schools and throughout the justice system. As an Elder I can help make a difference in the lives of the people that I personally come into contact with, but if a mass change in attitude is to ever take place, it must come from an educated society and an educated justice system."

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Senator Thelma Chalifoux recognized by NAIT

by H. C. Miller

Senator Thelma Chalifoux was honoured recently with a Distinguished Friend of the Institute Award by the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT). "Each year our Board of Governors accepts nominations for individuals who have been instrumental in helping to ensure student success," explains Philip Mulder, spokesman for the Edmonton-based institute's corporate communications office. "Senator Chalifoux has been most supportive of our Aboriginal students and active with our Aboriginal Student Club," he says.

Chalifoux was a graduate of NAIT's sister institute in Calgary, having completed Construction Estimating many years ago at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology. In addition, her education included graduating from the Chicago School of Interior Design and from Lethbridge College's Sociology program. "Senator Chalifoux has demonstrated the importance of confidence and positive role modelling to Aboriginal student success," says Mulder.

NAIT President Sam Shaw recognizes Chalifoux's contributions as well. "She is truly a driving force of the Aboriginal community across Canada. She's a woman whose leadership and determination have been nothing short of inspirational," he said at the awards banquet held May 8 at the Macdonald Hotel. "Senator Chalifoux has made a difference in the lives of many students by encouraging them to begin and to continue their post-secondary education."

Aboriginal students come from across Northern Canada, northeast BC and Alberta to train at NAIT. Many return to remote communities with their newly-acquired skills and make a significant difference to the economy and society back home, continues Mulder.

Robert Coulter, spokesperson in Senator Chalifoux's St. Albert office regretted that she was unavailable at press time, as she was travelling to meetings, but she asked him to forward her comments to *Alberta Native News* readers. "Senator Chalifoux has been fully flattered and honoured that NAIT has given her the Distinguished Friend of the Institute award. She's overwhelmed and humbled," he says. Chalifoux has been a lifelong advocate of Aboriginal young people gaining post-secondary training, he says. "There is such a need for opportunities in education, and NAIT does good work with the Aboriginal students. She's happy to have her name associated with an institution that is proactive in its approach to welcoming Aboriginal students and ensuring their success," he adds. Chalifoux furthers her work with the Institute by lending her name to an award which the Aboriginal



Student Club presents each year to an individual who has made a contribution to Aboriginal student success.

Senator Chalifoux is no stranger to receiving awards, although as Coulter points out, she is very modest about her accomplishments and discusses them rarely. She is the first Aboriginal woman, and the first Metis, ever appointed to the Senate of Canada, to which she was named in 1997. She was awarded the National Aboriginal Achievement Award in 1995. She has been an active member of the Metis Nation of Alberta since 1961.

About her current work with the Senate, she says she has been in a learning curve all her life for the job. "I treat it as I do anything else: you go after it to the best of your ability. You win some. You lose some. And if you lose some, you take another angle," she concludes. By her example and by her encouragement of the students at NAIT, she has passed on this winning attitude to them as they pursue their educational endeavours.



Hidden treasures

by Xavier Katsapit

I went for a walk today on a trail in the nearby forest. It was nice to wander around outdoors under the warm spring sun. I walked with a friend of mine to visit a favourite spot, which is a sand hill that offers a great panoramic view over the trees.

On our way we noticed garbage on the side of the trail that had been uncovered by the melting snow. It seemed like such a foreign and strange thing to find in such a beautiful area. We looked over the discarded items off to the side of an old sand road and found a ceramic bowl with female figures seated in a friendship circle design. It was intact and placed amongst the little trees and shrubs as though someone might have a reason to put it there. However it had been dumped as garbage. It was not store bought but a ceramic craft that someone had produced locally. In the rubbish we also saw hockey equipment that had been discarded and I found a hockey puck in the mess at the side of the road. I couldn't help but wonder at who had owned this stuff and how it had been part of someone's life. Now it was left there on the side of the road for the ages to declare.

It was strange to find someone's refuse on the side of our path but it also reminded me of how the snow that covers the landscape during winter can keep many things from sight. This discovery on the side of the trail also brought back memories of how my friends and I spent the first warm spring days as the snow melted up north in my home community of Attawapiskat.

Springtime can be a difficult time for people in my community. The melting snow and ice creates a great deal of water and muddy conditions that can make travel or any kind of activity very difficult. However, as a young boy growing up in my community, the melting snow and the large puddles of water created a new environment for my friends and I to play in and explore. Each spring, as soon as the snow started giving way to patches of mud and gravel, we walked the community to search for any lost or discarded items from the previous winter. It was a favourite activity of ours during this time of year when there was little else to do. The ice had gone from the rivers, lakes and from the outdoor rink so that we could not play hockey and the melting snow created a great deal of mud and water so that we could not ride our bicycles in the community.

Our first destination on these scavenging walks was to the local outdoor hockey rink. In the melting banks of snow we uncovered broken hockey sticks that we collected to help us during our explorations. They became swords, spears and walking sticks. Using our new walking sticks to probe the ground and turn over rocks and pieces of wood we combed the area around the rink to search for lost pucks. The surrounding boards of the rink supported a ten-foot high wall of plywood and chain link fence to keep any wild shots during a game from being lost. However, the pucks still flew over the boards and fence and most of the time they were lost in the deep snow. With this knowledge we searched enthusiastically for these black rubber pucks.

Once we completed our walk around the rink we wandered the community searching for anything that caught our interest. We combed the school yard, stomping around in our black rubber galoshes in ankle deep water while probing the ground with our sticks looking for a new treasure in the receding banks of snow. It was a great way to pass the slow days leading up to and during break-up or Maachestian. I remember our loot consisting of small tools, wrenches, screwdrivers and pocketknives. On our best days we even found coins or dollar bills that had been dropped and lost in the snow at some point during the winter.

Now that the snow has all but gone there is the new freshness of spring up here in the north. The geese are flying, the robins are back and little gifts appear here and there on the land if you care to look for them. I took my new found hockey puck home with a plan to use it on the road in front of the house next winter. It will come in handy.

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First Nation culture online

by Xavier Katakupit

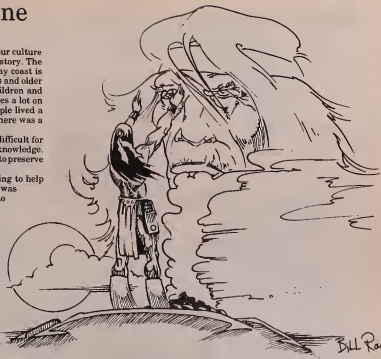
One of the most important ways for us First Nation people to keep our culture strong is through the preservation of our traditions, language and history. The culture and traditions in my home of Attawapiskat on the James Bay coast is passed down from generation to generation by our Elders. Our parents and older relations also reinforce the knowledge and teachings we learn as children and young adults. This way of learning and passing down knowledge relies a lot on close relationships with one another, which was easier when my people lived a traditional lifestyle on the land. There were fewer distractions and there was a more natural and slower pace of life.

Now that my people spend more time in a modern community it is difficult for our Elders and our older family members to pass down the traditional knowledge. In a world where there is a faster pace of life we have to find other ways to preserve and keep our language and culture vibrant and strong.


Fortunately, there is an organization that has been actively working to help preserve First Nation heritage. The Ojibway and Cree Cultural Centre was created as part of a new awareness in the 1970s to do something to preserve the First Nation culture in the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN) area in Northern Ontario. Since the Centre was first established in 1976, the organization has worked on numerous projects with the goal of helping our people retain and maintain our culture, language and traditions. The Centre has done this by initiating numerous projects and programs that have created several books and publications about the First Nation people in the NAN area. In addition, the organization's resource library has collected over 6,000 titles on First Nation history, culture, education, arts, crafts and language; close to 200 videos pertaining to the Native peoples of North America, a reference section and other sources of information on First Nation issues. Some of the most important work the Cultural Centre has done in the past and continues to do today is recording the teachings and stories of our Elders and making this knowledge available for everyone. The Cultural Centre's language department has a collection of these recordings, many which feature Elders who have now passed away.

This great collection of information has been a valuable resource for my people. In addition, the Cultural Centre has also received requests by individuals from other parts of the world to access materials the organization has collected over the years.

Recently, the Cultural Centre has taken another step in its development to make this wealth of information more available. The organization developed a new website on the Internet to promote its services and programs. The greatest feature of this new website is an online catalogue of all the resources available at the Cultural Centre. The catalogue is user friendly and is actually a searchable database for all of the Centre's library materials. Anyone can search the online catalogue and with a library membership you can borrow these resources from the Centre.



The new website and state of the art online catalogue on the Cultural Centre's library resources will be a great service for First Nation remote and isolated communities in the NAN area and other parts of the country that want to learn more about their history. The new website also features more information on the Cultural Centre and its history, the organization's programs and services and the First Nation NAN communities it serves. The new website can be accessed at www.ocec.ca. Congratulations to everyone at the Centre for keeping up with technology and taking another firm step to preserve and promote our First Nation culture and traditions.



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Saskatchewan Elder enjoyed accomplished career

by H. C. Miller

Willy Hodgson has achieved a lot of goals in her 35-year career. Not only was she one of the first Aboriginal

women to pursue a nursing career after graduation from the Manitoba School of Nursing in Portage La Prairie, but she was the first woman president of the International Association for Native Employment. Along the way, she studied psychology, social work, and human justice at the University of Regina. She was one of the first Aboriginal registered psychiatric nurses in Canada.

Born on the Sandy Lake Reserve – now named Ahtahkakoop, the Cree word for starblanket – in 1935, Hodgson grew up speaking Plains Cree and English. She married Bill Hodgson and worked as a nurse in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

"I love people, whether they're friends, family or colleagues," says Hodgson simply. "I've enjoyed the people I've worked with and knowing all of them, and I've always learned from them all." Her work included frequent contact with handicapped individuals as well, and she remembers her encounters with them fondly and warmly.

Hodgson completed a practicum in Legal Aid in Moose Jaw, and served as social worker, rehabilitation counsellor and therapist for 27 years. "I was able to speak up for people in the court system on many occasions, and could be especially sensitive to the different cultures and values," she says.

Hodgson has seen many changes over her career. "When I first started to get an education there were no scholarships or any kind of financial aid for Aboriginal people. I had to do it all on my own."

"Thankfully, today, there are so many wonderful things happening where people can be supported while they get their education," she says. She sees upcoming generations less dependent on welfare and other forms of assistance. The enrolments at colleges and universities are going up.

The Hodgsons were blessed with four children. "My husband Bill and I have two daughters and two sons and I'm very proud of them. And my children are also my friends," she says. The enjoyable role of grandmother of two will be increased in the near future as a third grandchild is on the way.

Hodgson's daughter Heather teaches in various faculties at the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College at the University of Regina and works as an editor for the Canadian Plains Research Center and Coteau Books. "Our mother has been noted time and time again for her contribution to the betterment of

her people through efforts in culture, language and employment development," she says. "She's been active in the Saskatchewan Mental Health Association, the John Howard Society, the United Way, the Law Society of Saskatchewan, and many more organisations." As well, she has conducted numerous cross-cultural workshops for government agencies, private organisations and corporations, and she has served on national councils on Native ministry and social justice for the Anglican Church of Canada. In 2001 she was appointed Elder at the Canadian Plains Research Center at the University of Regina, in order to provide advice and guidance about cultural and spiritual matters for Aboriginal people. She's also been active in writing book reviews about First Nations books. "And she has long been recognised as an Indian spiritual leader by the Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, Michael Peers," concludes Heather. Her many awards and distinctions include a Saskatchewan Order of Merit, Citizen of the Year, and Woman of Distinction from



Willy Hodgson

the City of Moose Jaw.

As an Elder Hodgson has some things to say to the young people of today. "First you have to try to learn about yourself. You should be proud of your culture, and recognise it as unique. But don't focus on your differences, only learn about them and understand them," she says. Within First Nation culture are some very deep values, such as respecting Elders and the animals, and the plants on Mother Earth. "She sees the role of Elders as one which can encourage children and their parents to get an education, to heal from the addictions that were brought about by the clash of cultures. "Addictions have decimated us." As an Elder she has helped people overcome the effects of the residential school experience too. "I facilitated workshops for five years for the Nechi Institute in Edmonton right across Canada, and helped to address the many issues which have resulted from the disruption to our culture."

Hodgson shares her own philosophy which she practised as she grew up, taught by her parents. "If you want to forge a path for yourself, and not wander, you have to know where you've been. If you don't know where you come from, you don't know where you can go."

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Memories of another time

by Xavier Kataquapit

Most First Nation Elders I know like to be out on the land. They have followed a very traditional lifestyle from early on in their lives. It has been difficult for many Elders to adjust to a different pace of life in our modern First Nation communities. I have talked to several of my older relatives and other Attawapiskat Elders who have told me that they miss living on the land and being closer to a natural environment where life is less stressful and meaningful.

In many remote northern First Nations like my home community of Attawapiskat on the James Bay coast it has only been in the past 40 to 50 years that our people were introduced to a modern way of life in an established community. Before this people did not live in one spot but were more nomadic. This change in lifestyle brought many benefits and conveniences that have made life easy in some ways. For many this new modern lifestyle did make life better. I have heard numerous stories from the past of hardship and difficulty for my people. Proper shelter was difficult to establish in cold weather and food was sometimes hard to find during periods when the number of animals and birds declined. Many Elders tell me that many of the changes and improvements that came to them when they moved into the community were welcomed because these conveniences made life easier and more comfortable. However, it also meant that their traditional life on the land would change forever.

My parents, Marius and Susan, recently left home for a few weeks or so with my brothers and sisters to stay at a family campsite for the spring goose hunt on Akamisk Island. I was happy to hear that my grandmother Louise Panmartin was also making the trip back to the land. They travelled by snowmobile over wet and slushy conditions to reach the hunting camp where they will stay for a few weeks to hunt geese. They will return after spring break up. Both my parents are getting older and my grandmother is not as active as she was a few years ago, after all she is in her eighties. I worry about their ability to continue travelling and living out on the land but they tell me that they find it more comfortable and restful outside the community. I know how much it means to them.

My parents and grandmother lived a very traditional lifestyle for most of their early lives. My mom and grandmother lived with their family 100 kilometres north of Attawapiskat on the Nawash River on the James Bay coast. Their family had hunted and lived in this area for many generations. In the mid 1960s they decided to move to Attawapiskat and live in the community on a permanent basis. Dad's family was historically located along the Attawapiskat River.



© CHRISTOPHER HARVEY CHAMBAUD.

The Kataquapits adapted over the years to being in Attawapiskat.

The other night I called home to talk to my sister Jackie who had just come back after a short stay with everyone out on Akamisk. She told me how much our grandmother was enjoying her time on the land. My parents and grandmother are living comfortably in a small fully insulated house on the pebbled south shore of Akamisk Island. Dad and the men are spending their days hunting geese near the camp and my grandmother is helping mom with the cooking and light chores around the house. The grandchildren are also experiencing the goose hunt. My sister mentioned that the most enjoyable time of the day for our grandmother is taking a short walk in the woods to collect a pot full of snow from the remaining patches of the white stuff to make tea. I am sure these spring days out in the bay bring back many happy memories

for her. Memories of another time when life was far less complicated.

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Elder returns the lessons of life

by H. C. Miller

Many years ago, the wise teachings of Elders helped Edna Manitowabi turn her life around. Today she is an Elder herself, and is dedicated to sharing the teachings she received with other lost and wandering souls as well as on this quest for knowledge.

"I'm a product of the residential school. As a result, there was a lot of confusion and chaos in my life," she says. In the late 1960s, she had an awakening and a desire to embark on a spiritual quest. That led her to seek out the Elders, looking for the Aboriginal knowledge. "It was an incredible need for survival. I needed something to keep on going." Manitowabi knows instinctively that what she was looking for included identity and a need to go back to her roots. "I needed to know who I was, to have pride and self-esteem," she remembers.

Manitowabi is originally from the Wewikemikong on Ontario's Manitoulin Island. She comes from a rich heritage of the Ojibway and Odawa nations. By the time she was beginning her quest for knowledge, she was living in Toronto. Aboriginal culture and tradition were considered to be dying and being taken over by the mainstream culture. Powwow dancing and traditional ceremonies had been outlawed. "But, thanks to the Elders, I received the knowledge I needed and immediately began to find many other people wanting to do the same."

She became a strong advocate for the revitalisation of Aboriginal traditions, ceremonies and spirituality. She worked especially with women, using her knowledge from the Elders to help them empower themselves. "Because of where I've been, because I've gone through these same sorts of experiences, I could help them."

Through singing the ancient traditional prayer songs, and the sacred ceremonies, she recognised the incredible power in sound. "I realised the sacredness of sound and how we can recover our own voice through it," she says. "The teachings in the prayer songs help us to have a sense of freedom, a sense of peace within ourselves." Family members who were involved in the era urged her to take her songs to the people through the stage where she created the role of the mother in Drew Hayden Taylor's play *Someday*, which toured Native communities throughout Ontario. The success of this venture then led to an

invitation to perform in *The Indolent Boys* by M. Scott Momaday at Harvard University in Boston, and a five-week voice intensive workshop at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia.

She continued her work in Toronto, performing as a storyteller for the De-ba-jeh-mu-jig Theatre and for Aboriginal Voices, and has acted in films for the National Film Board, as well as performing as a traditional singer and assisting in research.

"I've never had acting lessons. I was speaking from my heart. Even though I was only in residential school for three years, the relationships with my family had been severed. There was a sense of loss, of abandonment, of being discarded, and these feelings are released, and I feel so liberated."

Manitowabi has also been involved in an ecumenical movement in Crow Agency in Montana and in Morley in southern Alberta. "The purpose was to bring the Elders together, to have regular conferences or meetings with them," she explains. While different First Nations have specific traditions and languages, there are also many similarities. "There are many words that are similar and the teachings and ceremonies inspired us all."

Manitowabi especially enjoys the drum. "The vibration, the sound, the words of the prayer song really speaks to my soul, it seeps right into it," she says. She became a teacher in the Three Fires Midewiwin Lodge where she carries the responsibility of the Pipe, Mide teachings, sweat lodge, fasting lodges and woman teachings. She directed, translated, and interpreted stories and songs from Ojibway to English.

Happily, today culture is being practiced and preserved once again, and opportunities to immerse oneself are available. "It's incredible what's happening now. We can reconstruct our lives, and specifically the female spirit," she says. Fasting and spending time with nature are increasingly being sought. As an Elder herself now, she is often asked to lead ceremonies where people fast and reconnect with the earth.

"We send them out with song, and with a prayer, to consider their lives." The fasters have no distractions such as family or everyday issues to keep them from their quest. "Frequently non-Aboriginal people ask to be included and are inspired and refreshed as well," she says. Non-Aboriginal students are frequently in

attendance in the classes she teaches at Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario where she has developed and researched courses in Culture and Community, Aboriginal Theatre, Indigenous Knowledge and Aboriginal Women Studies. She also teaches an Ojibway language course. "The students want to be educated in Aboriginal teachings as they bring about a sense of understanding."

Manitowabi loves what she is doing. "When you see people returning from fasting, they are like brand new people. There is an aura about them - they have found something, they are reborn." She is motivated and inspired to continue her work.

The inner peace she has created for herself is sought by those looking to create their own. "A sense of going without food and water, which we take for granted, helps us to begin to realize how important it is, and what we are doing to the earth and how we are desecrating it through pollution," she says.

"We have to protect and look after our resources, and leave something for those generations yet to come."

Marrie Mumford, Artistic Director of the Aboriginal Arts Program at The Banff Centre, is one of many who have received teachings and guidance from Manitowabi. "The program is honoured that Edna will return to Banff this summer as the Cultural Director and Traditional Singing Teacher for the Aboriginal Dance Performance program. When Edna is present in our programs... something special happens... we are surrounded by her knowledge and the spirit and love she brings to the work. She is both an incredible teacher and an incredible artist. I am so grateful for my life, each time I have the opportunity to work with Edna."



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Hard working B.C. chief receives recognition

by H. C. Miller

Chief Simon Lucas of the Hesquiat Band of the Nuu-chah-nulth First Nation on Vancouver Island has an impressive array of accomplishments listed on his biography. He has worked hard in many capacities to preserve the livelihood and rights of the many Aboriginal commercial fishermen, a trade in which he participates himself.

In May, he was honoured and recognized for his extensive involvement when he was presented with an honorary degree from the University of British Columbia at the institution's convocation ceremonies in Vancouver. "He has dedicated his life to the conservation and restoration of the marine and freshwater ecosystems of our province," says Nigel Haggan of the BC Fisheries Centre at UBC.

The collaboration between Lucas and the BC Aboriginal Fisheries Commission is extremely important. "We are a trilateral organization with the UBC First Nations House of Learning, also located on the UBC campus," he explains. One of the objectives of the collaboration is to make university fisheries science more relevant to the research priorities of First Nations, says Haggan. As well, the group hopes to accelerate the enrolment of Aboriginal students in masters and doctoral programs so that First Nations people have their own traditional knowledge matched with scientific training. "Finally we are finding effective ways to bring together the traditional ecological knowledge and the highly quantitative fisheries sciences in the more Western mode," he concludes.

Lucas is a source of inspiration and strength in all of those things, he adds. His involvement in these joint ventures has increased the attention of all First Nations and other people on the issues. "We believe that his presence will be very catalytic in all these areas," says Haggan.

Chief Simon Lucas is hereditary chief of his First Nation and also served as elected chief for 30 years. He has served as co-chair of the local tribal council, as chair of the BC Aboriginal Fisheries Commission, and was a board member for the Native Brotherhood of BC for many years. He is active in the Aboriginal Disability Society and served the Port Alberni Friendship Centre as board member for many years, to name only a few of his many successful endeavours.

Yet with all this activity, he manages to stay connected to his culture and his home community. He is a family man, a role model, and a man with compassion for the plight of his people. "He comes from a very deep philosophical background," continues Haggan. "In his culture the first rain drop symbolizes the first drop of life to all living things, from the highest peak of our mountains down to the spawning beds." Simon comes from seeing and knowing an abundance of the wealth of the food chain, and of various species of salmon. He knows that the many little spawning streams are in fact a very high contributing salmon resource to his people, and to their culture and to the commercial fishery, he adds.



Chief Simon Lucas

Chief Lucas is very much involved in his traditions and culture, and is fluent in his native tongue. "He is a popular speaker at international and national forums on environmental issues which affect fisheries and Aboriginal peoples," says Haggan. The chief has been instrumental in the fight for Native involvement in the province's fishing industry, and is also closely associated with the Northwest Indian Fisheries in Washington state and the Columbia River Intertribal Fisheries Commission in Oregon state.

Lucas works closely with ecosystem restoration projects and has greatly expanded the role First Nations people play in resource management, says Haggan. "Simon Lucas is a great British Columbian, a great First Nations person, and a great Canadian. He is very deserving of this honorary degree and the recognition it brings to his accomplishments. We are grateful to work with him."



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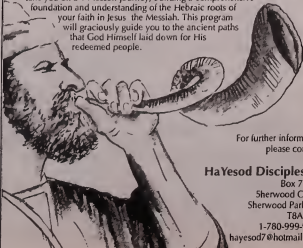
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Elders input helps offenders reintegrate after prison

by John Copley

Newcomers to the capital region might think that the Edmonton Institution for Women is a special education facility for the fairer sex. In reality it is one of Canada's newest federal prisons for women. Opened in November of 1995 the facility, which will undergo a status change from minimum/medium to a multi-level security facility this fall, can accommodate about 98 inmates in a uniquely designed surrounding that includes nine houses, a mental health unit (Hummingbird) and an enhanced special security unit that will be utilized by up to 15 maximum security offenders when construction is completed later this year.

Prison reform, though it still has much to accomplish, has come a long, long way in Canada since the turn of the 20th Century, and it appears that those changes, not only in outside appearances, but in individual and collective attitudes and the development of meaningful, workable programs, will be ongoing well into this new century.

The brand new Edmonton Institution for Women (EIW) was built near the intersection of 111 Avenue and 178 Street several years ago. When you drive by the facility or look at an aerial view of the grounds it isn't difficult to see that a great deal of planning and foresight went into the project. But it isn't until you talk to the staff who work at the prison that you come to realize that there's a lot more to the design than meets the eye.

"In 1990," explained EIW Warden, Janet-Sue Hamilton, "a Correctional Services of Canada (CSC) initiative turned out a report entitled *Creating Choices*. The initiative not only set in motion the construction of five new national prisons for women, it also recognized that a major percentage of the women who were coming into the prison system were of Aboriginal ancestry."

A plan of action was needed, old methods of rehabilitation had proven futile. As a result of the report a new philosophy of reform came into play. Aboriginal people, it was realized, do not adjust well to western justice nor do the philosophies and lessons of the Canadian prison system seem to change or teach or rehabilitate Native offenders. In 1997 the Aboriginal Issues Branch of the CSC "embarked on a developmental exercise, to create a comprehensive strategy on Aboriginal Corrections."

It's been a success. Since that time the concepts adopted by Corrections Canada have seen a wide range of diverse programs and services developed with the Aboriginal offender in mind. Included in these new initiatives are programs such

as Aboriginal treatment and healing, Aboriginal-specific health strategies in HIV/AIDS, FAS/E and traditional healing, Aboriginal healing lodges, halfway houses for Aboriginal offenders, agreements with Aboriginal communities to offer services to Aboriginal offenders, a national Aboriginal employment/recruitment strategy, Elders working in institutions and in the community, liaison services in federal institutions, Native Brotherhood and Sisterhood groups and more.

Native staff and volunteers are playing a more important role in the prison system than ever before. In fact, said Warden Hamilton, "this particular facility was in part designed by two Aboriginal Elders from Hobbema, Martha Whitebear and Agnes Smallboy, whose expertise and knowledge in Native spirituality can be found in the institution's spiritual grounds, an area complete with a traditional sweatlodge and room for the Elders who visit with us to share their experiences and their stories."

Many of the significant changes, in so far as Aboriginal community and Elder participation is concerned, have come about because of a new awareness about just how important a role the community can play in helping offenders straighten out their lives. And that community involvement usually begins with a visit from an Aboriginal Elder.

Elder participation isn't a new concept but since the late 1990s it has been introduced with a much stronger emphasis than it had in the past. Christine Daniels is one of those Elders. She has contributed her time, her energy and her wisdom in numerous prisons (Remand Centre, EIW, Ft. Saskatchewan) over the past decade and a half and though her health has waned, she is still involved on a part time basis at the Edmonton Max, Alberta's maximum security prison for men.

"Nothing can ever be gained by looking people away and throwing away the key," said Ms. Daniels in a recent interview with *Alberta Native News*, "but much can be accomplished through dialogue, mutual trust and hope. It is never too late to fulfil your dreams, to accomplish your goals or to believe in yourself."

Aboriginal offenders represent a large percent of the prison population, particularly in western Canada where more than one-third of the total are Aboriginal people. That figure reaches nearly 50 percent at the Edmonton Institute for Women.

"The importance of the Elders and other Aboriginal people and groups working within the prison system can not be understated," assured Cecile Gobeil, an Aboriginal liaison officer employed by the institution. "Intervention is often the best solution; sometimes it is the only solution. It has already been proven that Aboriginal offenders reintegrate into society much quicker and much more successfully when they have outside support. The Elders play an integral role and the positive influence they bring into a program or into individual counselling or chat sessions can help determine what kind of a path an offender will choose to follow once they are released back into society. The Elders are wise and they know how to share the history and the culture of the Aboriginal offenders they are here to work with. They know the problems, they understand how the choices we make affect our lives and they are able to relate how history, both past and present, will affect the future."

Programs for Aboriginal offenders are varied and include regular sweats, pipe ceremonies and visits from the Elders. Traditional parenting, substance abuse programs, lifetime services, survivors of abuse and trauma programs, literacy and language and life skills programs – these are just a few of the many learning opportunity programs designed to inform, educate and enlighten EIW inmates.

On May 21 the EIW will begin its "My Journey" program, a six week undertaking designed by EIW staff to get offenders ready for release and reintegration. Beginning at the beginning, the program's first couple of weeks concentrate on the reasons why the participating offender is serving time. The second phase of the program deals with the present and offers insight in a variety of personal situations and circumstances and how to deal with them by making the right choices. The final phase deals with the future, job seeking, money managing, and placing priorities.

Aboriginal offenders who participate in these self-enhancing programs are less likely to re-offend and therefore less likely to return to the prison system. "Successful reintegration is not uncommon, in fact, it is what we are all striving to achieve," explained Cecile Gobeil. "The programs and the opportunities to learn and to grow are here and offenders who are determined to make the most of them

Continued on page 20



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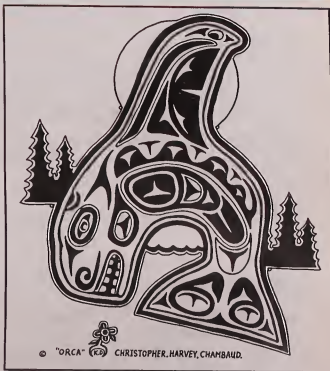
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The homeowner program assists low-income homeowners to repair their sub-standard dwellings by providing financial assistance to correct major deficiencies. The dwelling must require a major repair in one of the following areas: heating, plumbing, electrical, or structural. To qualify for RRAP funding, the total combined gross income of all related family members living in the household must be under a certain level. The income ceilings presently vary between \$21,500 and \$39,500 gross per year and are based on the size of the family. The number of children, their age and gender are factors in calculating the income ceiling for each family. (The income ceilings are reviewed by the CMHC yearly and are subject to change). Should the total gross household income exceed 60 percent of the determined ceiling, the homeowner will be required to contribute a portion toward the cost of repairs. Properties in Edmonton valued above \$175,000 are not eligible for RRAP funding.

The disabled program assists low-income homeowners to modify their dwelling to accommodate a disability (such as wheelchair accessibility, allergies/environmental hypersensitivity, hearing/visual or age related disabilities). The income ceilings and guidelines for the program are the same as for the homeowner program. A landlord who is currently renting to a low-income disabled tenant may also be eligible for assistance through this program. The landlord will be required to keep the rent charged (including utilities) under the monthly median market rents established by CMHC.

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Elders input, Continued from page 18

will. Many of the women we see at the EIW come from harsh backgrounds; many have lost their identity, their self-esteem, their trust, even their ability to care. The influence of an Elder can be monumental in circumstances such as these and we warmly welcome the opportunity to work with them."

"We are always interested in meeting with Aboriginal Elders who'd like to share their knowledge, their experiences and their visions by participating in CSC programs," assured Aboriginal Program Manager, Lynn Lowe. "Their involvement is invaluable. We also encourage Aboriginal volunteers and mentors to contact us if they are interested in participating in our programs through the sharing of knowledge and ideas. We also encourage tutors, storytellers, craftspeople and others with a special talent or gift they can share."

The more involvement from people outside the institution, the better. That's because successful reintegration into society after a term in prison works better if a support team is in place.

"We hope," says a CSC memorandum "to create a network of people that we may dialogue with. We believe that through positive relationships and solid partnerships with the community, CSC will be able to offer Aboriginal offenders better programs and services. We encourage the Aboriginal community in Canada to utilize the full potential of Sections 81 and 84 of the Corrections and Conditional Release Act, and to become involved in the correctional process. For healing lodges or any other correctional initiative at the community level to be truly effective, will require the support and involvement of Aboriginal communities."

For more information about how you can participate in CSC programs contact either the Edmonton Institution for Women by calling (780) 495-3657 or Corrections Services Canada, Prairie Region via email to webmaster@csc-sec.gc.ca.



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Kortech Ltd. specializes in dust control

by John Copley

In western Canada the wind blows strong during the spring, fall and winter months and thick dust is as commonplace as a fly on a horse's back. "We've got the answer and we've been having a great deal of success with it," said Jerry Korchinski, who with his father Al and brother Jim, operates the family business, Kortech Ltd., an Edmonton-based, western Canadian dust-busting company that's been offering its services to government, industry and the private sector since 1984.

"For the past decade and a half," explained Jerry Korchinski, "we've been providing dust control for municipalities, counties, engineering and construction firms, oil companies and more recently, First Nations communities. By utilizing a high grade calcium chloride brine we're able to keep the gravel and dirt roads in western Canada relatively comfortable to drive on and much easier to live beside."

That's because the service that Kortech's professional applicators provide usually has to be done just once a year – though severe dust conditions may require a couple of applications – one during the spring and again in the late months of summer.

In the early 1990s Kortech had its first experience working in an Aboriginal community when they did some occasional work for the northeastern Alberta-based, Janvier First Nation. More recently Kortech's services have been put to use on Alberta's Siksika Nation, located about an hour's drive east of Calgary. The sprawling southern Alberta First Nation, with a population of about 4,200 members, has been living with high winds and dusty conditions for more time than anyone cares to remember. Though the chief was away from the reserve and could not be reached for comment, Korchinski said the Siksika community was happy with the results of their work.

"The chief and council have fully endorsed our work and appear very happy to finally be able to minimize the dusty conditions they once had in their community," assured Jerry. "We are very interested in meeting with more First Nations and Métis groups throughout western Canada and encourage anyone interested in the services we provide to call us for more information. We'd also encourage interested parties to contact the Siksika Nation for their evaluation."

The Siksika Nation can be reached at (403) 264-7250.

Product shortage is never a problem when you're dealing with Kortech Ltd. because they've had the foresight to invest in the equipment necessary to prepare an almost unlimited supply of the high-grade calcium chloride brine needed to do the job right.

"We are able to produce over 1.5 million litres per day," said Jerry Korchinski, who added that the company also maintains "two storage facilities of eight million litres, something that insures our commitment to meeting the seasonal demands of dust control and road building in Western Canada."

Dust control is just one of several areas of expertise that Kortech Ltd. offers to western Canadian enterprise, communities, governments and industry. Other facets of the company deal with liquid de-icing, base stabilization and winter sand treatment.

"No matter which of our services our clients are in need of, when they deal with Kortech they can be



assured of efficient delivery, timeliness and friendly, experienced personnel," noted Korchinski, who said that during the spring, summer and early fall, dust control was at the top of the clients' list of needs. "Kortech," he added, "also provides assistance with on-site mobile storage, reducing waiting time and maximizing equipment-spraying time. An added bonus is that an en-route product can still be delivered in the event of a rain out."

Kortech is a family owned and operated business and perhaps that's why everyone involved in the company is on the same wavelength when it comes to dedicated service and customer satisfaction.

"We made a commitment that if we are going to do business, then we're going to be available when the customer needs us – and that includes Sunday afternoons and Saturday nights – if fact, we staff our facilities 24 hours a day, seven days a week," explained Jerry. "Our on call service and mobile communication with our carriers results in the customers receiving precise, accurate, and timely information of scheduled arrival, truck capability, and product quantity. We wouldn't have it any other way."

When it comes to quality control, there's almost nothing to monitor. "Our W-Grade 1.32 specification has not changed since our first day of production," explained Korchinski. "Our facilities have shipped over 500 million litres over the past 13 years. Kortech markets itself from a position that extends from strength of supply to proven experience with a multitude of municipal and private projects. Our facility is rated as a major producer in North America."

Why choose Kortech to look after your dust control needs?

"Selecting the appropriate calcium chloride brine is very important in order to attain the best results," explained Jerry. "Our company produces the strongest naturally occurring concentration of liquid calcium/magnesium chloride, and the lowest sodium content, in Western Canada. We've learned a great deal over the years and each of our experiences teaches us something more. When you choose Kortech, you choose experience, you choose know-how, you choose people who take pride in their work and in the research they do to ensure that any new discoveries quickly become client advantages. Call us. Try our service. You'll quickly discover what many others already know – Kortech Ltd. is second to none."

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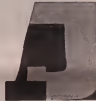
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No applications will be accepted beyond the closing deadline. Interviews will be held in Ottawa, Ontario. Only those applicants selected for an interview will be contacted.

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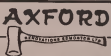
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aboriginalportal.com: "Linking you to Canada's First Nation, Inuit and Metis People"

Following the launch of "aboriginalmall.com" in March 2001, Dan Martel, of Four Winds & Associates, continues to develop cutting edge web-based content and business tools for the Aboriginal community. The newly launched aboriginalportal.com is designed to be a one-stop, online source for Aboriginal businesses, programs, services, news and events, cultural destinations, community contacts and much more. This website portal is the ideal venue for Canada's Aboriginal people to share their culture, talents and creativity with the world!

"aboriginalportal.com" will direct Internet browsers to all of the great Aboriginal News, Events, Contacts, Businesses, Programs, Services and others out there that take advantage of listing and linking themselves on the portal for free. Another new addition available on the portal is a free, web-based Aboriginal E-mail service called "abmail.ca" which can be used as an exclusive email account but also allows the user to link existing E-mail accounts to one web-based E-mail interface.

The newly redesigned "aboriginalmall.com", accessible from the portal, continues to offer a modern, cost-effective venue for Aboriginal entrepreneurs and organizations to showcase themselves and their products online.

Detailed product and store directories offer such selections as "Books & Entertainment", "Arts, Crafts & Artifacts", "Computers", "Furniture", "Health Products" and "Jewellery". Consumers from around the world are able to find products



CHRISTOPHER HARVEY CHAMBAUD,

and services through the categorized product directory or the alphabetical store directory. As well, Aboriginal entrepreneurs, businesses and organizations can market individual products or create a "storefront" that contains all of their products and services. Credit card transactions are completed online through the fully secured website or the option to send a cheque or money order is provided.

Another new addition is the business to business (B2B) web-based procurement system developed to accommodate a wide variety of an organization's requisition and procurement needs. The system facilitates ordering supplies, tendering and other ways of acquiring goods and services. aboriginalmarket.com is designed to create a single place where multiple buyers and multiple suppliers can fulfill procurement requirements. However, the procurement system can be the web-based tool used between just one buyer and one supplier as well. The core functionality includes tendering, request for quotes, direct purchases, purchase order and invoice creation, inventory management and of course the track ability and reporting capability that having an electronic version of these functions accommodates!

These tools are designed with the user in mind and provide a valuable opportunity for members of the Aboriginal community to be successful participants in the increasingly important world of Information Communication Technology. Whether it's news, events, products or people you are looking to find – or if you are looking for a place to be found, visit www.aboriginalportal.com today!

four Winds
ASSOCIATES



Dan Martel
President

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Aboriginal Education

Young student excels in studies and gives back to the community too

by H. C. Miller

Kalea Lafontaine is only 16 years old, but she is preparing to enter the University of Regina this fall to begin a double degree program. "I'll graduate with degrees in both computer science and business," she says, adding that she'll likely require five or six years of studies to complete her course work. "I'm starting my first English course at university in July, right after my June 26 graduation from high school."

Lafontaine faces her studies with a no-nonsense attitude. She was born in Regina, and attended a mainstream elementary school for three years before her parents began home schooling her. She continued working at home until Grade Nine. "After that I combined attendance at public school with home schooling and correspondence for Grades Ten, Eleven, and Twelve" she says.

Lafontaine has enjoyed her schooling and because she wasn't restricted to progress according to the regular academic year, she could work at her own pace. "I was only 11 years old when I started Grade Nine," she laughs. She also credits her family and the teachers she has had who went out of their way to help her with any difficulties she encountered in her school work. "One teacher just last year in Grade Eleven, for example, stayed after school for three hours of her own time to explain some concepts to me," she says.

Leigh Canham is Lafontaine's math teacher at Winston Knoll Collegiate where she has been attending high school. "I'm pleased to help Kalea whenever I can. She's an exceptional student with exceptional abilities," he says. Canham adds that he's been teaching school for over twenty-five years, and has only come across a student like Lafontaine a few times. "She shows amazing maturity for one so young, and she's dedicated to learning and hard working. It's been a real pleasure having her in my class." Lafontaine appreciates Canham's help as being a major factor in her success.

Lafontaine applied for, and was successful in achieving, a scholarship from the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC). "I'm very thankful for the fact that they even considered my application. There must have been a lot for them to choose from, and I'm really fortunate that they chose me among all those applications," she says. RBC awards five scholarships every year of \$4000 to Aboriginal, Inuit and Métis students entering four-year programs at university, or two-year college programs. An independent committee of academics from the Aboriginal community reviews all applications and makes its final selection of winners based on each student's personal and academic achievements, as well as individual financial need. "The extra money will really help with tuition and textbook purchases," she adds.

One course that Lafontaine has really enjoyed was a Native Studies class in high school. "Our historical background was interesting, but I think I got the most out of exploring our Native Spirituality. I have gotten a lot of strength from faith in my Creator," she says, adding that she is proud of her Saulteaux and Cree heritage. "I'm proud of who I am, and I live so my ancestors will be proud of who

I have become."

Lafontaine is the youngest of five children in her family. "I have four brothers who I've called on lots when I've had a problem with school work," she says.

Lafontaine has an entrepreneurial spirit and would like to operate and manage her own business one day, probably right in her home province of Saskatchewan. She would consider the Royal Bank as a future employer, partly to return the favour they did by granting her the scholarship.

The Lafontaine family formed a musical group many years ago and performs regularly for audiences. "We all sing and play piano. We perform at a lot of charity fund-raisers, such as the Aboriginal AIDS Regina and Telemiracle," she says. The family sings a variety of musical genres, and includes selections that raise cultural awareness by featuring a Native beat. The group performs in communities and on reserves all over Canada, from Siksika in Alberta to Moosomin in Ontario, helping to raise funds for local projects.

Her advice to other students? "Accept struggle as part of the process. It makes us stronger to have to find solutions to problems that may be preventing us from reaching our goals. Always believe that you can do it and just keep working at it."



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Four enterprising artists open collective

by H. C. Miller

The Alberta College of Art in Calgary had an unscheduled showing of students' work recently. Four artists put together an impromptu exhibition of their work for display in a prominent area of the institution.

Adrian Stimson and Terrance Houle are two of the artists involved, and helped organize the event. "We're all from different disciplines," explains Houle. "I'm in the Fibre department, and my work varies from mixed media, installation to performance. I try not to limit myself," he explains. He enjoys expressing a facet of his Native culture through performance, and finds he often touches the hearts of his audience, many of whom have "been there themselves." For example, he

portrays himself as an Aboriginal growing up in the city but still managing to maintain his Native traditions and culture. "When I was a kid my family would hit the powwow trail every summer and that helped," he says. Like many people, he has always lived a dual role, and been somewhat comfortable in both worlds, but has felt rejection too.

"I kind of liken it to the stereotypical cowboys and Indians," he laughs. "The Hollywood image is always there, present in my work, and still present in society." As a Native he laughs at these representations. "I kind of turn it back on the originators of the stereotypes by using it positively in my work, whereas it was originally not meant as a positive idea." Many urban Aboriginals were adopted or raised in foster homes, and not as familiar with their culture as they like, and identify with his performance and other work.

Houle is from the Blood Reserve and claims a rich heritage of Blackfoot and Gitkway which he likes to include in some way in his work as well.

Adrian Stimson is a painter of acrylics, oil and mixed media. One recent project was to paint a family tipi which he set up in the centre of the College for several weeks. Stimson is from the Siksika Nation. He enjoys using the elements of Native culture, colours and patterns in his work. "For example, buffalo are prominent in his work," Houle explains, adding that Stimson created a unique piece where he stretched a buffalo hide around a rectangular frame. "It's phenomenal. This unnatural vision was



PEACE HILLS TRUST

Peace Hills Trust takes pride in encouraging Native Artists to develop, preserve and express their culture through our

20th Annual Native Art Contest

Prizes - Adult Category	
1st	\$2,000.00
2nd	\$1,500.00
3rd	\$1,000.00

Prizes - Youth Categories	
1st	\$100.00
2nd	\$75.00
3rd	\$50.00

All entries are restricted to "two dimensional" art, i.e. work done on a flat surface suitable for framing, and not larger than 4 feet x 6 feet. This contest is separated into the following age categories:
• Adult (18 & over) • Youth (14 to 17) • Youth (10 to 13) • Youth (9 & under)

Peace Hills Trust "Native Art Contest" Rules and Regulations

- Peace Hills Trust "Native Art Contest" (PHAT Contest) is open to Aboriginal Residents of Canada, except employees of Peace Hills Trust who are not eligible.
- Entries shall consist of a complete and signed Entry Form and an **UNFRAMED** two dimensional work of art in any graphic medium not larger than 4 feet x 6 feet, and be received no later than 4:00 p.m. on September 6, 2002. Entries will be judged by a panel of adjudicators arranged through Peace Hills Trust whose decision will be final and binding on the entrant.
- By signing the Entry Form, the entrant represents that the entry is wholly original, that the work was composed by the entrant, and that the entrant is the owner of the copyright in the entry; warrants that the entry shall not infringe on any copyright or other intellectual property rights of third parties. Each entrant shall, by signing the Entry Form, indemnify and save harmless Peace Hills Trust and its management and staff and employees from and against any claims consistent with the foregoing representation and warranty, whether by Libelious Rights in the entry for the terms of the PHAT Contest, and to the extent that the entry is chosen as a winning entry, agrees to waive and assign the entrant's Libelious Rights in the winning entry, together with all rights of copyright and reproduction, in favour of Peace Hills Trust, agrees to be bound by the PHAT Contest Entry Procedures and Rules and Regulations. All entries complying with the Rules and Regulations will be registered in the PHAT Contest by the Official Registrar, Mr. Suzanne Lyttle. Late entries, duplicate entries, or entries which do not comply with the PHAT Contest Entry Procedures and Rules and Regulations will be disqualified.
- All adult winning entries will become the property of Peace Hills Trust and part of its "Native Art Contest" Collection. Any arrangements made with winning entries will be retained as follows: entries hand delivered by the entrant should be picked up by the entrant, all other entries will be returned by ordinary mail. Peace Hills Trust assumes no responsibility for entries which are lost, damaged or destroyed when being returned to the entrant. **CHILDREN'S ENTRIES WILL NOT BE RETURNED.**

Entry Procedures

- Ensure that all signs on the Entry Form are filled in correctly, and that the form is dated and signed, otherwise Peace Hills Trust reserves the right to disqualify the entry.
- All entries must submit as many entries as they wish however, a **SEPARATE** entry form must accompany each entry. In the children's categories only **ONE** entry per child is permitted.
- All entries must be **UNFRAMED** paintings or drawings and may be done in oil, watercolor, pastel, ink, charcoal or any two dimensional graphic media. All entries will be judged on the basis of appeal of the subject, originality and the clarity and treatment of the subject, and the creative and technical merit of the artist. Entries which were entered in previous PHAT Contests are ineligible.
- Peace Hills Trust will not acknowledge the receipt of any entry. If the entrant requires notification, the entry should be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped postcard with which will be mailed to the entrant when the entry is received.
- Should you wish to self select your work to be displayed in the PHAT Contest, please advise us as to release your telephone number to any interested purchasers. Should you not complete that portion of the Entry Form, your telephone will not be released.
- Peace Hills Trust will not select the entries for the right to display any of all entries during the PHAT Contest.
- Adult Category Prizes: 1st - \$2,000.00, 2nd - \$1,500.00, 3rd - \$1,000.00 Youth Prizes: 1st - \$100.00 2nd - \$75.00 3rd - \$50.00 on each category.

Peace Hills Trust "Native Art Contest"

Entry Form

Entry Description: Hand Delivered 4:00 p.m. Sept. 6, 2002 Mailed: Postmark Sept. 6, 2002

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☐ Yes, you may release my phone number to an interested purchaser. Selling Price \$ _____

I hereby declare that the information contained on this Entry Form is true and accurate. I warrant that I have read and understand the Entry Procedures and Rules and Regulations of the Peace Hills Trust "Native Art Contest", as indicated on the reverse and I agree to be bound by its terms.

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LEGENDARY EAGLE DANCE

CHRISTOPHER HANCOCK

quite striking," he says.

Julie Perron is a ceramic artist with a Dene background, having been raised in the Fort St. John, British Columbia area. "Julie uses natural elements. For example in a tea pot she made, she designed the handle with some branches and beadwork. She also made tipi saltshakers. As well as tea pots, her pieces include cups which she enhances with beadwork and other unique anomalies." Julie graduates this year so she's gone from our group," he adds.

Perron's cousin, Tiú Norwegian, is known as a foundation student in her first year, and is very much at home with her Aboriginal culture. "For instance she did a wonderful map of Canada on stretched leather, and noted places she had been," explains Houle. She mounted it on a branch frame. She is also an artisan who enjoys the traditional crafts, such as moccasins making. "All of us are comfortable with our culture," he says.

At the College, there is no actual support for the Aboriginal students in attendance so the collective gave these four a forum. "We are facilitating our own ideas and work. We've benefited by working together and have attracted others to our group as well, both Native and non-Native students," he says. New students who arrive from their secluded reserve homes experience quite a culture shock are welcomed into the group as well. "We mostly learn the Western and European style of art and by working together we can bring our own culture and styles into our scope of work as well."

There's a need in the school for this Native representation, he says. "In Calgary, in Alberta, and certainly within Canada, there is a good number of Aboriginal people present, yet we are almost invisible when it comes to our artwork, in urban galleries," he explains.

The College did put on one show earlier this year, entitled "An Indian Affair," but that opportunity opened to the public on Valentine's Day. The exhibition went on to the gallery operated by well-known Aboriginal artist Joane Cardinal-Schubert, also in Calgary. "Joane has been very encouraging for us, as emerging artists. She's been helpful in showcasing our work and in providing support for us," says Houle.

As a former Alberta College of Art student, Cardinal-Schubert could identify with the artists. "This generation of Native artists desires to move beyond the immediate emotional reactions to a place within, where the spirit rather than the material define power. There are fighters and there are joiners in this world, she says. "This group of artists chooses to be both. For me it is a wonderful experience to see this happening."

Tiny ambassador represents all of Canada in international pageant

by H. C. Miller

Jessica Hodgson is enjoying her reign as Miss Tiny Universe 2002. The five-year-old Samson Band member from Hobbema was selected as Canada's first-ever entry to the international competition, held in October 2001 in South Africa. "The competition is part of the bigger Miss Universe Pageant," explains her mother, Deanna Hodgson.

Participants were judged based on an interview, wearing of a garment representing culture of the contestant's country, and a stage and glamour component. "Jessica's been modelling in fashion shows since she was two years old, so she's comfortable on the stage," says Deanna.

As Miss Tiny Universe, Jessica has been involved in the Adopt-A-Child project. "The focus of this international organization is on finding missing children, and the philosophy behind it is that children thinking like children can help find missing youngsters," explains Deanna. The pageant has become involved in the project as part of its contribution to the community.

Jessica isn't the first child in her family to pursue a modelling career. "Our son Jesse is 12 and has been modelling, acting and singing for the last eight years," she says. "Modelling is a great confidence builder for kids," says their proud mother. Both Deanna and husband Wayne actively encourage their children and were present in South Africa.

Edmonton-based Chan International, the modelling agency with whom the children work, is the

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Miss Tiny Universe 2002 Jessica Hodgson

national producer on behalf of Canada of the Little Miss Universe pageant. They informed all the children of the upcoming pageant and encouraged them to participate in the worthwhile venture. "It's a pageant with a purpose," says president Mary Chan-Goebl, "and we're pleased to support the mission to find missing children."

Chan-Goebl says Jessica possesses a natural talent for modelling. "She is also a polite, friendly, kind-hearted young lady who makes an excellent child ambassador and it is obvious she loves what she is doing," says Chan-Goebl. Chan Agency instructor Tilly Kormanick has also been instrumental in

Jessica's success.

Jessica is also enrolled in tap and ballet lessons, and has been swimming competitively for the last two years. "Jessica has been watching her big brother and she just assumed that performing and modelling are part of growing up," says Deanna. The five-year-old won everyone's heart at the South Africa competition by performing her Native Fancy Shawl dance.

The family enjoyed the experience of travelling to South Africa for the competitions. "There were 26 countries involved. We went without any unrealistic expectations of her placing in the winning circle, we just went to enjoy the experience," says Deanna. "When she was crowned we were really happy, and very proud that she was representing Canada in this worldwide competition."

Jessica enjoys the challenges and performance of competitions and modelling. In two of the qualifying events – the interview and the stage glamour – she took first place. "She's very comfortable in the public eye and she really likes people," her mother adds.

The family will return to South Africa where Jessica will hand over her crown in October of this year. "We'll find travelling a little easier this year – the trip there last year occurred just after the September 11 tragedy in the U.S.A. and we were pretty apprehensive," says Deanna. Jessica made a lot of friends during the time in South Africa. "It was amusing to see all of these little girls, all dressed up and being quiet during the competitions, and then running around playing together a little while later, being typical kids," laughs her mother.

The family recognizes teachers Lisa Allan and Mary Lynn Kary, and grandmothers Grace Buffalo and Mary Crier for their help along the way with the children's achievements. "We are all really proud of the accomplishments both the kids have achieved," she concludes.

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The Healing Journey

Report links crime to substance abuse

by John Copley

If you were to ask the average Canadian to name at least two things that the majority of prisoners in Canadian jails will agree are responsible for their lot in life, they'll probably come up with the right answer — alcohol and drugs. That's because over the years we've come to learn that jail is often the end result for people who drink too much and for people involved in the use of illegal drugs. Until now we didn't really know if what we've been thinking was truth or myth, but the recent release of a study carried out by the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA), has put an end to any doubt.

"There isn't a great deal of statistical information about the nature of the association between alcohol and drugs and running into trouble with the law," explained Richard Garlick, Director of Communications for the CCSA, an Ottawa-based, arm's-length federal agency whose mission, in part, is to provide a national focus for efforts to reduce health, social and economic harm associated with substance abuse and addictions. "Until now," he added, in an interview with *Alberta Native News*, "we could not say to what extent crime is actually caused by psychoactive substances, and which of those substances are most likely to lead to criminal acts. This study greatly enhances and advances our understanding of the root of crime in Canada and lays the groundwork for continued efforts to reduce the harm associated with alcohol and other drugs."

The results of the three year study were released jointly by Canada's Solicitor General Lawrence MacAulay and CCSA's Chief Executive Officer Michel Perron, at the end of April. Designed to shed more light on the relationship between crime and sub-

stance abuse, the study revealed clear contrasts that indicate alcohol is more often associated with crimes of violence, such as murder and assault, while illegal drugs are generally tied to theft via break-ins and robberies.

"This report tells us two things," said MacAulay, the day of its release. "It tells us that drugs and alcohol cause crime — they aren't just related — and that the cost of this abuse on Canadians is high." The CCSA study is based on nearly 10,000 interviews with Canadian prisoners, both male and female, both federal and provincial, both new offenders and those who have been serving time for years. It revealed that about 54 percent had been under the influence of drugs or alcohol when they committed the crime for which they were now serving time.

Michel Perron, the man who heads the CCSA, told media the study proved that "the nexus between alcohol, drugs and crime is very strong. This is a huge factor contributing to crime in Canada." He added that when looking at the overall crime rate, "between 10 and 15 percent of these crimes are linked to illicit drugs; 15 to 20 percent to alcohol alone and 10 to 20 percent to a combination of alcohol and illicit drugs." Nearly 50 percent of all the crimes looked at in the study are related to the abuse of alcohol or drugs. The sad thing is that many of the violent or serious offenders interviewed in Canada's jails realize that if they'd stayed away from alcohol and didn't take those illegal drugs, they wouldn't be in jail because they might not have committed the crime.

CCSA documents explain that "the proportion of gainful crimes (robbery, break and enters, etc.) attributable to alcohol or drug use is based on the percentage of inmates convicted of a crime who (a) reported that they had committed the crime to obtain drugs and (b) were tested and found to be alcohol or drug-dependent."

The study was not confined to any one particular crime just as it was not confined to any one particular nationality, but numerous prisoners of Aboriginal ancestry did take part in the survey.

"The main findings of this report confirm the close association between the use of alcohol and other drugs, and criminal behaviour, and indicate that a substantial portion of this association is causal," explained Richard Garlick. "The study did not target any one particular nationality or race but it did prove that a large proportion of inmates in both federal and provincial prisons reported using alcohol and illicit drugs before coming to prison."

"The newly released report may be the first of its kind, but it's not likely to be the last."

"The extent of substance abuse and criminal behaviour are not stationary phenomena and the linkages between the two change over time," said Garlick. "For this reason, the research described in this report needs to be replicated in the future and further methods developed to improve the robustness of the findings. The estimates of the share of crime that can be attributed to drugs and alcohol should be based on



studies using more than one type of research method. In addition to the event-based methodology used in this report, longitudinal studies are the best way to examine how the volume of crimes varies with the use of psychoactive substances. It is hoped that this initial study will set the stage for further exploration."

Providing a national focus for efforts to reduce health, social and economic harm associated with substance abuse and addictions, the CCSA serves the interests of all Canadians on issues related to substance abuse and addictions. An arms-length, national agency established in 1988 by an Act of Parliament, the CCSA is funded by Canada's Drug Strategy and through its own revenue-generating efforts. Among other things the agency promotes informed debate on substance abuse issues and encourages public participation in reducing the harm associated with drug abuse. It also disseminates information on the nature, extent and consequences of substance abuse and supports and assists organizations involved in substance abuse treatment, prevention and educational programming.

For more information about the report or other CCSA functions write to: The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, 75 Albert Street, Suite 300 Ottawa, ON, Canada K1P 5E7. You can also reach the agency in Ottawa by calling (613) 235-4048 or by directing a fax to (613) 235-8101.

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Problem gamblers say ugly reality of big losses hard to cope with

by John Copley

"Gamblers have no limitations and if you don't know that, you're lucky, because that means you don't gamble," said Adrian Clarke, just sitting down for a quick coffee between blackjack deals at a local Edmonton casino. "Personally I don't know what to do. I can't go home broke, I can't work a full day without getting uptight and it seems like I can't pull myself away from here, money or not."

Clarke, an Edmonton-born Metis without political affiliation or organizational ties, is a self-confessed "loser who just can't quit gambling." Alberta has just put an end to the moratorium on gambling casinos in the province, a move that has been condemned by some, condemned by others. Those in the industry and the governments who are reaping profits that financial experts say are nearly equal to Canada's timber revenues, are in favour – as long as the new casinos that are created don't "infringe" or "create difficulty" for competitors.

Social groups, anti-gaming lobbyists, even whole communities have come out against government increasing gambling opportunities. Some communities, you may remember, voted an emphatic NO to Video Lottery Terminal (VLTs) but were saddled with them anyway.

"Nobody asked me," said Clarke. "Nobody came into the casinos and talked to the gamblers to see how much they were losing, to see how far they were behind on their bills."

"It's (gambling) hurt me a lot but it's hurt my family a lot worse," remarked Randy Willis, another Metis having difficulty controlling his gambling habit. "No question it's a habit; it's worse than smoking. You're always chasing a dream but when you get home at night it's nightmares you have to live with."

"I know I'm weak, so what?" retorted Amy, who agreed to talk but wouldn't reveal her last name. "I'm on minimum wage, I live at home and every time I turn around there's nothing I can afford anyway. I'll probably never have a car or a home of my own and what the hell, I just might get lucky and pull the handle for a big hit – then I'll be on easy street."

"Nobody will loan me any money any more and I'm not working so I come here in case one of my gambling buddies strikes it rich," said Leon Braswell, who came to Alberta two years ago in "hope of getting lucky" at the tables in Edmonton. A member of British Columbia's Sechelt First Nation, Braswell is now living in Edmonton and a fixture at one of the downtown casinos.

"I'm staying at the Spady (Centre) at night and I hang around here until closing and no matter what I do, I can't seem to raise the money for a ticket home. Can you lend me some?"

Clarke, now in a second interview, introduces Jim (Big Jim) Sinclair to the table. A native of Ontario, Big Jim moved to Alberta in 1998. He's working but admits he's not working hard enough to keep his money in the bank.

"I can't describe it, but I know I've got a problem," he said, admitting that his gambling has already cost him his wife and two children, not to mention his vehicle, pawned for \$300 and his house, the money split with his wife, who incidentally still has her share and won't give Big Jim a nickel of it. "Can't blame her for not answering the phone and can't blame her for calling her brothers in to watch over her whenever I'm around but it doesn't make me feel too good. Do you know where I can turn for help?"

When government announced last October that more than 61 different recommendations accompanied a Gaming Licensing Policy Review there was little mention of programs to deal with problem gambling. What the province has said on several occasions, however, is that they intend to pursue their course so that the gaming industry grows in unison with progress, without suffering social backlash.

So far only AADAC or several privately owned gambling addictions counselling services can provide any type of help for people such as Clarke, Amy, Sinclair and Braswell.

"I don't get it," closed Clarke. "More than a half billion dollars was generated last



year from gamblers in Alberta alone. You'd think they could come up with programs that work, programs that are free, programs that offer alternatives – we're not all accountants and we don't all have the ability to exercise self-control. I guess not enough harm has come to people yet, but if you take my case for example, and I don't think I'm alone, and add it to the numbers of others that have gone through what I've gone through, I'd bet they'd stack up pretty high – the numbers I mean."

Maybe so Mr. Clarke, but as long as you want to "bet on it," chances are you're never going to be a winner.



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Survival and Beyond gathering to be held in July

The Indian Residential School Survival Society (IRSSS) is hosting a special gathering on July 4-7 at UBC entitled "Survival and Beyond: Hope, Help & Healing."

The gathering is specifically designed to bring together over 1000 residential school survivors and their families, community organizations, members from various church denominations, government representatives and the general public.

"Our purpose in co-ordinating this gathering is to create an environment where we can engage in meaningful discussions and dialogue as we work together in our collective healing journey," explained IRSSS Executive Director Chief Robert Joseph. "Our hope is that this gathering will serve as a foundation upon which we can begin to plan and co-ordinate our efforts in all our communities across the province."

The gathering theme "Survival and Beyond: Hope, Help & Healing" was put forward by the IRSSS Regional Coordinator Team and staff based on three years of feedback from communities across the province.

The Planning Committee and many community members agreed that the theme creates a unique blueprint that encourages all participants to discuss their successes while also learning about other approaches that are practical, relevant and meaningful to their respective communities.

"By creating an environment where hope, help and healing are fully supported, added Chief Joseph, "we begin to create a shared vision that will guide us toward reconciliation."

Between 1861 and 1984 (a period of 123 years), there were 19 residential schools operating in BC (130 across Canada). Thousands of First Nations children ages 6-16 were required by law to be placed in these institutions for the course of their mandatory school years. (Grades 1-12). It is estimated that at least five

generations of First Nations people have been directly impacted by these institutions.

Since the closure of the schools, survivors and community organizations in First Nations communities across BC and the rest of Canada have been working to support survivors and their families as they move through their respective healing journeys toward reconciliation.

Currently there are 158 community healing projects operating across BC over 70 communities.

Projects offer a wide variety of initiatives and services to thousands of residential school survivors and their families. "These projects and their communities would benefit enormously from being linked and networked with one another through a gathering such as this," said Chief Joseph.

Partnerships and sponsorships for this historic gathering will take many forms... in-kind contributions, community partnerships and direct funding sponsorships, and 'sister projects' (activities and events hosted on-site by another group or agency) to name

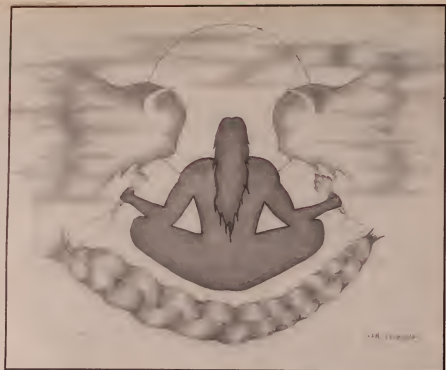
only a few.

There are also opportunities for community healing projects to offer workshops and presentations about their successes along with special project display areas where participants of the gathering and the public can meet, share information and expand their individual and professional networks.

"Because we have designed this gathering to meet the interests of many people, there are many creative and unique partnership and sponsorship opportunities available," said Chief Joseph.

"For instance, several Aboriginal organizations have already indicated they will be contributing in-kind services through teams of volunteers who will assist in conference registration, counselling support, family fun activities, and cultural activities."

For more information about the gathering or partnership and sponsorship opportunity and benefits, contact Chief Joseph or IRSSS Program Director Sharon Thira at (604) 925-4464, e-mail prsp@prsp.bc.ca.



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Motor vehicle crashes are a societal problem

by Linda Kool

Not too many years ago Canada's oil and gas industry was referred to as the "killing fields". Well we've come a long way and we still have a long way to go. However, that doesn't mean we have to speed to get there, because 36 percent of all work-related deaths are due to traffic trauma. We still have more accidents in the industry than we should, but the leading injury locations have changed from on the rigs to on the roads. In the Oil and Gas Industry between 1996 and 1999 there were more than twice as many work related fatalities due to motor vehicle incidents than all other causes COMBINED.

According to the Alberta Motor Association (AMA), Traffic Trauma on Alberta roads is the leading cause of death and injury for Albertans under the age of 30. Annually it kills seven times as many Albertans as homicide, eight times as many as AIDS and one hundred times as many as meningitis. Traffic injuries represent our least recognized social, economic and public health problem in Canada today. We all pay a total of \$10 million each and every day of the year for the costs associated with property damage, medical, fire, ambulance and productivity loss from vehicle collisions.

Have you ever noticed that the world's worst driver always ends up in the car immediately in front of the world's best? All of us overestimate our own driving ability and in Driver Opinion Surveys, two out of three Alberta drivers believe their abilities are above average. Driver attitude and behaviour are significant contributing factors in vehicle collisions. According to police reported statistics driver error or misjudgment is a contributing factor in over 85 percent of collisions. The most common "Driver Actions" that cause collisions are:

- Speed too fast for conditions (we are all in a hurry)
- Aggressive Driving (notice there is more and more every day)
- Following-too-close (most common cited driver action on urban police reports)
- Inattention and Distraction (ever drink coffee or talk on the phone while driving?)
- Impairment (alcohol, drugs, fatigue, emotion)
- Running off Road (rural crashes)

And, 50 percent of the fatally injured were unrestrained (a first place finish for Albertans).

The first thing we must do to reduce these disturbing numbers is to recognize that we are the problem and, as individuals, we have a major impact on the outcome.

Speed is the primary contributing factor in almost 30 percent of fatal crashes, and 22 percent of crashes overall. In New Zealand the billboards read, "THE FASTER you go, the BIGGER the mess." They don't mindc words down under.

The impact of speed reduction is dramatic. Studies indicate that a reduction of between two - five kph can result in 30 percent fewer injuries and fatal collisions. For Alberta alone, in a single year, that translates into a reduction of 120 deaths, 900 serious injuries and \$450 million in societal cost savings. The time invested to achieve those returns would be less than ten minutes in a drive between Calgary and Edmonton.

Look into the record of motor vehicle accidents where you work. If you feel that there is an unacceptable level of cost in personal injury, insurance, maintenance, repairs, and job delays then look into the AMA "MISSION POSSIBLE" - Traffic Safety Initiative.

"Mission Possible" is a traffic safety partnership where organizations who share a common vision of traffic injury reduction participate in programs that can make a real difference. If you're not in Alberta, a number of other provincial Automobile Associations are considering similar initiatives and may be of assistance. You can



become involved at the community, corporate and individual levels and all three play an important role in reducing motor vehicle related deaths and injuries.

Change is possible. Programs targeting employee traffic safety provide the tools needed to address unsafe driving for both on and off the job.

Alberta statistics have been used here for two reasons. They were available and Alberta has the highest rate of collision injuries by population in Canada, something we need not be proud of.

Hopefully, "Mission Possible" or other similar provincial programs partnering with individuals, industry or communities will make us all safer drivers and reduce the human, medical and overall societal costs of motor vehicle collisions. WHAT ARE YOU DOING BEHIND THE WHEEL?

Linda Kool is Communication Administrator with Canadian Petroleum Safety Council.

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Focus on Resources

Gabriola land deal brings treaty closer to ratification

by John Copley

Another landmark treaty agreement appears to be close at hand in British Columbia now that a deal has been made between the provincial and federal governments to purchase 393 hectares of land (970 acres) that will be included as part of a settlement package with the Gabriola Island-based, Snuneymuxw First Nation. Embroiled in negotiation since 1993, the year the Snuneymuxw Nation first filed a statement of intent with the B.C. Treaty Commission, the recent announcement was met with smiling faces.

"This is a positive step forward," said Michael Rodger, the chief negotiator for the Snuneymuxw First Nation, soon after the announcement was made. "These lands are part of a larger package of lands we're negotiating (and) they are an important building block on Gabriola Island."

According to Department of Indian Affairs communications consultant, Ken Kolba, the recently purchased land will remain "vacant and undeveloped until the

final treaty" has been resolved. Until then, Ottawa will own the land and hold it in trust.

Putting emphasis on the fact that the band is both willing and anxious to work together with local government for the betterment of the community and the region, Rodger said one of the biggest priorities was to ensure that industry and other heavy land use projects are no longer built so that they surround Snuneymuxw First Nation residential

areas. "The whole issue in negotiating a treaty in an urban area is to harmonize land use, planning and governance issues," he said. "We'll sit down with the Islands Trust and the Regional District of Nanaimo and the City of Nanaimo to discuss a variety of issues around local governance."

An again-off again negotiations have taken place over the years but until now little has been done to resolve a treaty claim that goes back to the promises made during the Douglas Treaty of 1854. The members of the Snuneymuxw First Nation (formerly called the Nanaimo First Nation) are a Coast Salish people who speak the Hul'qum'num language. Occupying the eastern shores of south central Vancouver Island for more than 5,000 years, the traditional homeland of the Snuneymuxw people was once spread out across more than 200,000 hectares.

According to the First Nations leaders, "our exclusive traditional territory comprises more than 95,000 hectares and extends from several kilometres north of Neck Point to Boat Harbour in the south, Gabriola Island and other small islands to the east and the western reaches of the Nanaimo River watershed. We also have an additional 104,000 hectares of non-exclusive traditional territory that we share with other First Nations. This includes seasonal villages, fishing villages and resource areas in Qualicum, Chemainus and on the Fraser River."

The treaty agreement currently being negotiated by the band comprises a total of about 1,000 hectares of land, now known as the 'Kensington Lands', which are located on Gabriola Island.



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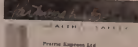


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U.S. senators vote against drilling in Arctic Refuge

by John Copley

The North American economy might depend on the money it earns from oil and gas revenues to keep the western hemisphere up and running, but the U.S. Senate at least knows where to draw the line. They are also fully aware that despite the fact that from time to time, depending on the availability or whim of some foreign dictator, there's almost sheer panic over the possibility that the stockpiled reserves of both these commodities could run short in this part of the world. But the recent vote they cast that turned down a proposal to begin exploration and development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) indicates that at least one North American political organization has retained a shred of dignity and a great deal of willingness to protect the environment and the people who depend on an unspoiled north for their very survival. A recent vote in the U.S. Senate saw Republican President George Bush's proposal to begin oil and gas exploration shot down when the vote count revealed a 54-46 split against the idea. The majority vote included those of eight republican senators who crossed the floor to vote against their boss and let him know they were also opposed to exploring for resources at the expense of the environment, the Native population and the wildlife that the U.S. government specifically wanted to protect when they initiated the park and the ban on exploration and development in 1980.

Despite concerns expressed by the U.S. Congress and the U.S. Senate, the Bush administration has been adamant in its attempt to overturn the drilling ban so they can begin sending exploration teams into the Arctic. Saying that drilling was essential to both national security and job creation/employment opportunity, President Bush told the American people that he wanted to promote energy efficiency, develop solar and wind power and push for fuel efficient vehicles with better pollution control.

But the Senate, perhaps swayed by the findings earlier this year by biologists with the Interior Department and U.S. Geological Survey, decided to keep the ban intact, at least for now. The survey the biologists were involved in indicated that severe consequences could result to the northern caribou herds and other wildlife species if drilling was allowed to take place in the Arctic Refuge.

When the results of the survey were released, Interior Department spokesperson Mark Pfeifle, tried to turn a negative into a positive when he announced that "the report bolsters the administration's mandate that ANWR production must require the most stringent environmental protections ever imposed. It demonstrates that with new technology, tough regulations and common sense management, we can protect wildlife and produce energy."

A hint of how a Senate vote might turn out came the day after Pfeifle's remarks when the Democratic Senator from Connecticut, Joe Lieberman, said that "once again the administration has released a report undermining its own case." He said it was clear to him that the findings confirmed that "environmental destruction would occur" should the ban be lifted and the refuge opened to oil development.

During the past couple of years there's been a lot of discussion in both Canada and the U.S.A. about bringing oil from the northern oil and gas resource pockets to where it is needed the most, south of the Canadian border. Both an Alaska Pipeline Project and a Mackenzie Pipeline Project have been studied and discussed at length. Oil and gas consortiums have signed agreements with numerous Aboriginal groups in the north while they await final word from government and from the economic situation of the world around them. With

oil prices hovering around \$24 a barrel no one is stepping up to invest their money right now. Drilling supporters on both sides of the border are gunning for northern development and have made it clear that they won't stop pushing Ottawa and Washington until a deal is in place to move everything from a possible Arab-generated energy crisis to a need for more employment opportunity in the north, drilling advocates say there is just too much oil and gas in the north for them to ignore.

The other side, particularly as it relates to oil and gas reserves in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, which incidentally is either the home or near the homes of both Canadian and American Indigenous peoples, says the oil deposits are "too small and can not substantially reverse" the domestic supply nor eliminate the need for imported foreign oil. Caught in the middle of the disagreements, the surveys, the feasibility studies and the obvious controversy of Arctic drilling are the numerous First Nations, Metis, Inuit and Innu peoples who reside in the north and who for the past several years have heard the promises, counted on the work, envisioned the revenues and brightened at the thought of having an opportunity to earn a living. For them the wait is far from over because it could take years to resolve the issue and even then, because of contracts and Native employment guarantees, only about 15 percent of most of the work crews will be represented by northern dwelling Aboriginal people.



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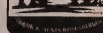
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Cooper says the most gratifying part of running Peace Air is listening to the heartwarming stories about his employees. "And I hear them every day," he adds.

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Cooper says he's "truly humbled" by the calibre of people working at Peace Air.

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book review

Thunder on the Tundra

by Natasha Thorpe, Naikak Hakongak,
Sandra Eyegetok and the Kitikmeot Elders
Printed and bound by
Generation Printing, Vancouver, B.C.
ISBN: 0-9689636-0-9
Review by John Copley

More than 200 pages of photographs, illustrations, beautifully designed maps and an outstanding compilation of views, news and insightful words of wisdom await *Western Native News* readers interested in learning more about the Bathurst Caribou and the Inuit people, who for centuries have depended on the great herds for their sustenance and survival. Written in a language and in a tone that everyone can understand and appreciate, *Thunder on the Tundra* is a collaborative effort that offers readers not only a series of invaluable lessons and insights that can't be gleaned from a typical library book but also the opportunity to hear the stories, read the anecdotes and relive the memories of close to forty hunters and Inuit Elders who offered their input into this one of a kind creation.

Thunder on the Tundra began unexpectedly more than four years ago when a group of Inuit hunters and Elders set out to ruminate the stories and experiences they shared with the Kitikmeot region caribou. Sipping tea and discussing the importance of their traditional knowledge, it was decided that an effort would be made to record that knowledge for others to share. The group initiated a strategy that became known as the Tuktu and Nogak Project, a venture that put onto paper what local hunters had experienced in the field. Readers of this book will appreciate the effort that was made to keep the actual words of the people that were interviewed during the duration of the research intact, albeit translated into the English language.

The authors who gathered and transcribed the words of their peers acknowledge that it was much more than the three dozen hunters and Elders that made this book possible and they've gone the extra step to ensure that the help they received didn't go unnoticed. Several pages of acknowledgements and a complete rundown of all the people involved in the Tuktu and Nogak Project have been included in the manuscript.

The Tuktu and Nogak Project relied on the unique collaboration not only with the hunters and Elders, but also with the youth, researchers and academics who played a significant role in bringing the project to its conclusion. The extraordinary amount of work that went into preparing, writing and finally delivering *Thunder on the Tundra* to the printers is evident by the vast amount of ongoing personal notes and sidebars found throughout the entirety of the book.

Readers will discover that much of what the writers have contributed in this personal account of ongoing encounters between man and beast is offered in the past tense. That's primarily because much of what took place before the turn of the 20th Century comes only from the stories that have been passed from generation to generation. The importance of this book cannot be weighed or measured, nor can it be ignored; it is through such stories and memories that the past lives on forever. Many of the ancient customs of the Qitirmiut are no longer practiced only because the necessity and the viability have disappeared with the encroachment of contemporary western civilization and the growing population of the region.

A passage in the book, *The Dawn of a New Spring*, offers an example of what used to be, before the coming of the rifle, the snowmobile and the grocery store. The following excerpt was taken from research notes made at the Hiukittanak Elder-Youth Camp in 1998.

"Imagine crouching strategically behind a hunting blind made of rocks; warm in your caribou skin pants, parka, and kamnit (boots) and waiting patiently for the first caribou to come close. You look over at your brothers, uncles, cousins, and father, who hide behind a rocky outcrop nearby. These men are hunched over, curved backs like boulders and camouflaged perfectly in their weathered caribou skin clothing that fades into the brown hues of the parched spring tundra and gravel. They wait without weariness, their bows and arrows ready. Meanwhile, your sisters, aunts, and kids are off in the distance moving methodically and deliberately to steer the caribou towards you. It is a joyous time and the excitement builds quietly. The caribou are here! The caribou are here! Let them walk to the waiting hunters.

"At last, the caribou are funnelled towards you. The thunder of hooves shakes the tundra as you launch arrows from your hiding place, all the while shooting accurately but quickly. You are careful to aim for the neck, so that the kill is fast and less painful. Sometimes you wait for two caribou to be side by side so that one arrow will hit fatally both animals. Your heart races as you hunt as many caribou as you need: one, two, three."

Before modern civilization made its impact on northern hunters the Qitirmiut would often pile the caribou hides and cache them away; the next winter might not be as plentiful as this because the caribou sometimes failed to turn up in large numbers.

"Spring has arrived; the feeling is festive and the caribou are back. Once again you can feed your family; this year you will not starve. The caribou have come."

Readers unfamiliar with the great caribou herds of the north might be surprised to discover that there are several different types of caribou herds, though most of the Qitirmiut Elders and hunters do not distinguish between them. What modern biologists refer to as the Bathurst or Queen Maud caribou is collectively known to the Qitirmiut as the Ahimuit or the Barrenland caribou herd. Another herd, the Victoria Island caribou, known by the Qitirmiut as Kiillink, spends much of the winter on the mainland,

THUNDER ON THE TUNDRA

Inuit Qaillimajungit of the Bathurst Caribou



Natasha Thorpe, Naikak Hakongak, Sandra Eyegetok, and the Kitikmeot Elders

migrating only as summer approaches. The Ahimuit caribou is a much larger animal than the Kiillink and as such is preferred by the Qitirmiut people.

There is a vast amount of knowledge to be gleaned from the pages of *Thunder on the Tundra*, and I suggest you go out and purchase a copy for your personal library.

If you don't see the book in your local bookstore ask them to order it or contact chapters.indigo.ca.

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b̄s̄Λ̄ ∇ V̄"q̄ D̄L̄T̄q̄ ∇b̄ D̄ōC̄Ār̄ōd̄ P̄C̄V̄ q̄∇̄s̄.
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∇̄s̄ >d̄ ∇b̄, ∇̄s̄ ∇ L̄r̄p̄r̄. P̄C̄ Λ̄r̄C̄r̄ ∇d̄ ∇ ∆̄r̄
b̄r̄p̄"C̄r̄ q̄Ūr̄Λ̄J̄Ūp̄r̄. P̄r̄ āb̄C̄K̄īō ∇Λ̄ V̄s̄ b̄r̄" q̄ōC̄ō
∆̄r̄ ōC̄∇̄s̄"ŪC̄P̄.

T̄b̄- ∇Λ̄ ∫̄b̄s̄ ∇ ∫̄C̄Λ̄ b̄ ∫̄C̄L̄ ∇Λ̄ r̄r̄ ∇s̄V̄∫̄
∇V̄ār̄V̄s̄ ∇b̄ ∇"q̄r̄ ōr̄C̄Ās̄C̄b̄s̄. ∆̄Ā" ∫̄s̄∇̄N̄r̄
r̄ōr̄q̄d̄ ∆̄r̄. āJ̄s̄ ∇Λ̄ ∫̄r̄p̄b̄ā ∇d̄C̄ D̄r̄ ∫̄Ūs̄∫̄.
C̄s̄r̄ b̄L̄ q̄ ∆̄"J̄C̄∫̄ ∆̄Ūs̄"ŪC̄ ∇Λ̄.

V̄s̄ ∇Λ̄ ∫̄d̄"Λ̄ō ∫̄N̄ā b̄r̄" ∇ ∆̄r̄ C̄V̄.

One evening an old woman was sitting outside her teepee watching for the hunters and berry pickers to come home. Everyone from the camp had gone for the day except for her, because she was crippled. She travelled only on her hands and knees. Her people had left a canoe down by the lake in case she needed to use it.

We proudly salute our Northern Elders
for their wisdom, vision and many accomplishments
toward preserving our culture.

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A true story as told by the late Sarah McKenzie.
Tapwe comu achimowin, tipithuw wethu ikih atotuhk
Sarah McKenzie kakih itih.

C̄V̄. b̄L̄ ∫̄Λ̄s̄, N̄Λ̄s̄ō ∇̄s̄ ∆̄r̄ ∫̄C̄" Sarah McKenzie
b̄r̄" ∆̄r̄p̄.

She was looking down the shore when a huge bull moose came out of the bushes and waded into the water. It was obviously going to swim across to a nearby island. There were no guns in camp and she wondered what to do with the moose.

She got a blanket and went down to the canoe.



b̄r̄p̄"C̄ō ∇Λ̄ ∇ s̄Λ̄"ŪC̄r̄ b̄r̄", ∇b̄ b̄ ∫̄C̄"∫̄ ∆̄ō"Λ̄
J̄h̄. >d̄ ∇Λ̄ ∇ P̄Ȳ∇̄"ŪC̄r̄ b̄r̄" ∇ L̄Ȳ r̄b̄s̄ ∆̄ō"Λ̄
J̄h̄ r̄ōr̄q̄d̄. b̄ḡ P̄ȲT̄ō ∇Λ̄ ∫̄C̄ J̄h̄ ∇ ∆̄Ūr̄
V̄Λ̄C̄L̄, L̄b̄ ∇Λ̄ V̄s̄ō ∆̄r̄q̄ō∇̄ō.

b̄ ∆̄ā"q̄∇̄Λ̄s̄ ∇Λ̄ ∆̄r̄q̄ō∇̄ō.

She managed to get into the canoe and paddled out to the moose. She had to paddle very quickly to get to the moose before it could reach the island.
The moose tried to swim faster as she got closer to it but she finally reached it.

In honour of the Elders. We salute you.

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Alberta Native News, MAY 2002